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THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION.

THE

DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION:

EIGHT LECTURES

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN THE YEAR 1875, *ON THE FOUNDATION OF*
THE LATE JOHN BAMPTON, M.A., CANON OF SALISBURY.

BY

WILLIAM JACKSON, M.A., F.S.A

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AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY," "POSITIVISM," "RIGHT AND WRONG," ETC.

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EXTRACT

FROM THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON,

CANON OF SALISBURY.

—— "I give and bequeath my Lands and Estates to the "Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University of Oxford for "ever, to have and to hold all and singular the said Lands or Estates "upon trust, and to the intents and purposes hereinafter mentioned; "that is to say, I will and appoint that the Vice-Chancellor of the "University of Oxford for the time being shall take and receive all "the rents, issues, and profits thereof, and (after all taxes, repara- "tions, and necessary deductions made) that he pay all the remainder "to the endowment of eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be estab- "lished for ever in the said University, and to be performed in the "manner following:

"I direct and appoint, that, upon the First Tuesday in Easter "Term, a Lecturer may be yearly chosen by the Heads of Colleges "only, and by no others, in the room adjoining to the Printing- "House, between the hours of ten in the morning and two in the "afternoon, to preach eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year "following, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between the commencement of "the last month in Lent Term and the end of the third week in Act "Term.

"Also I direct and appoint, that the eight Divinity Lecture Sermons "shall be preached upon either of the following subjects:—to confirm "and establish the Christian faith, and to confute all heretics and "schismatics—upon the divine authority of the holy Scriptures— "upon the authority of the writings of the primitive Fathers, as to "the faith and practice of the primitive Church—upon the Divinity

" of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity of the " Holy Ghost—upon the Articles of the Christian Faith, as compre- " hended in the Apostles' and Nicene Creed.

" Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight Divinity Lecture " Sermons shall be always printed, within two months after they are " preached; and one copy shall be given to the Chancellor of the " University, and one copy to the Head of every College, and one " copy to the Mayor of the city of Oxford, and one copy to be put " into the Bodleian Library; and the expense of printing them shall " be paid out of the revenue of the Land or Estates given for estab- " lishing the Divinity Lecture Sermons; and the Preacher shall not " be paid, nor be entitled to the revenue, before they are printed.

" Also I direct and appoint, that no person shall be qualified to " preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons, unless he hath taken the " degree of Master of Arts at least, in one of the two Universities of " Oxford or Cambridge; and that the same person shall never preach " the Divinity Lecture Sermons twice."

INTRODUCTION.

THE preliminaries desirable for an intelligent perusal of the following Lectures are stated in the first of the series. Some such explanations were imperative upon an author who had to preach his book before printing it; and this circumstance supersedes a good deal of what would otherwise have formed prefatory matter.

The Doctrine of Retribution is, I wish to impress upon my readers, a contribution, and *only* a contribution, to a subject as vast as it is interesting—the Philosophy of Natural Religion.* Any adequate

* The subject is, in fact, very much wider than may be generally imagined. It is so linked with the Philosophy of Natural Theology, as to make in strict propriety a part of the same connected Whole. From my first Lecture above cited, a fair idea may be acquired concerning the exact relations between these great provinces of the Science of Human Nature. It is there shown that Natural Religion may be treated simply as the logical consequent of Natural Theology; —or it may receive an independent grounding upon the truth of Moral Distinctions;—or, thirdly, these two Methods may be made to illustrate and verify each other. For reasons there assigned, I have preferred to employ the second Method, but with a constantly recurring regard to the third; and this kind of recurrence I wish to be considered as occupying the relative position of a confirmatory argument. The strength of such a verification will be much more thoroughly appre-

discussion of this subject as a whole, must involve details which might very probably occupy not eight, but eight times eight Lecture Sermons. Finding myself compelled to isolate one line of thought from its allies and supporters, and to treat it separately, I have ventured on endeavouring, with earnestness of purpose, to answer the most anxious question ever asked by the reasoning mind of Man—the question whether Retributive Justice is or is not sovereign over human Futurities? Along with an affirmative reply, comes the determination of another enquiry. For, if the facts of our Moral nature distinctly point to a finality of Retribution, they must also prove the reasonable truth of certain Religious beliefs, which transcend Man's present existence and constitute a Natural Religion.

In attempting a valid reply to these very solemn human demands, I have adopted a method very different in two respects from the kind of discussion not uncommonly used by recent controversialists.

Writers on Natural Religion often commence by submitting to critical examination some form of Faith which has been familiar to their childhood, and which rests its claim for acceptance on grounds of præter-natural evidence. This Belief, they strip

ciated by an occasional reference to my Essay on the *Philosophy of Natural Theology*, published just a year ago. And this is particularly the case with respect to Lectures III., IV., and V. ensuing, together with the first half of Lecture VIII., because upon the topics they contain a great number of facts and illustrations are given in the 1874 volume, which did not appear well adapted for recital from the pulpit.

of every supra-mundane character,—its transcendent doctrines included. They then go on to scrutinize the residuum. There is little difficulty in predicting, from the beginning of such a process, what must necessarily be its result: a *caput mortuum*—a devitalized mass of formal dogma, neither human nor yet in the least divine. Nothing for a struggling man to live by,—nothing in the strength of which any earnest man would dare to die.

The Method pursued in these pages is a reverse procedure. It does not set out from considering what has been held religious, but from what is ascertainably natural. The portraiture of Natural Religion is outlined after an examination into the specific character and attributes of Human Nature.

Of this investigation, the results are placed in a variety of lights, and are repeatedly tested and verified. In such-like respects, I have been unsparing —perhaps at some risk of putting a strain on my reader's attention. It may, however, be hoped that the forms of *oral* address, which are carefully kept unaltered, will lessen the dryness of that ever-pertinent enquiry,—Is what has been said probably or certainly true? *

* The maintenance of those actual shapes into which the several Lectures were cast, has caused a few repetitions. The Bampton Lectures are not delivered consecutively; *e.g.*, my own preaching turns occurred, as follows: February 21; March 7, 14; April 11, 18; and May 2, 9, 30. It is impossible, under such conditions, to avoid the necessity of reiterating statements which may easily escape the memory of auditors. So far as philosophic argument is concerned,

"Intervalla vides humanè commoda."

But all tests of reasoning must yield the palm of exactness and stringency to those most powerful touchstones,—interdependence, and coherency. And their application to my argument forms the *second* difference of Method to which I have alluded.

A Drama or Epic Poem ought, we know, to contain within itself a beginning, a middle, and an end. The same requirement is yet more legitimately demanded of philosophical thinking. Every conclusion ought to link itself with a demonstrated truth or an axiomatic first-ground by that kind of connection which, growing naturally out of the one, culminates with an equally natural meaning and propriety in the other. Philosophic thought which answers this description is evidently both coherent and interdependent. Its flaws, if there are any, will be readily perceived. But when the cohering parts are sound, the whole can safely be pronounced a Reality.

Thus much I have said for two reasons:—one, on my own account, and in order that whether my reader agrees with me or no, he may see that I have done my best to assist him in judging for himself. The other, because it seems time that some serious protest should be entered against the fashion of making English Philosophy into a department of English light literature. It may be true, that Easy philosophies must always dispense with principles,—for the plain reason that the discovery of principles is no easy task. And it is never difficult to cover up the *hiatus valde deflendos* by smart and plausible writing—by the quiet assumption of an

ipse dixi—or (safest of all) by relegating everything which the ingenious writer or intelligent reader may not happen to know, into the abysmal Profound of the Unknowable. With the employment of this much-misused phrase, all endeavour after coherency is, of course, resigned. But let it be emphatically understood that the opponents of Doubt and Denial in their modern forms—from dogmatic Atheism to moral and religious know-nothingness—do with uncompromising purpose accuse those airy shapes, one and all, of an incoherence thorough enough to make them, while glittering as soap-bubbles, like soap-bubbles, disappointingly unsubstantial.

In antithesis to the incomplete and ungrounded treatment which I venture openly to condemn, I have on each occasion stated the first principles upon which I myself rely; what certitude I attach to each; and why I conceive them to claim our assent. In like manner, I have tried to make it clear that the issue and end of my reasoning is in consonance with the functions distinctive of Human Nature; and, therefore, with our acknowledged aims and aspirations. So far as regards Mankind, I cannot but be of opinion, that such a harmony is in itself a conclusive argument. How much more so, then, when its consonance is greater, grander far,—wide as all we know of the Universe, and lofty as our purest and noblest thoughts concerning God!

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LECTURE I.

THE SUBJECT IN PERSPECTIVE.

LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

HABAKKUK i. 12.

"ART THOU NOT FROM EVERLASTING, O LORD MY GOD, MINE HOLY ONE?
WE SHALL NOT DIE.
O LORD, THOU HAST ORDAINED THEM FOR JUDGMENT;
AND, O MIGHTY GOD, THOU HAST ESTABLISHED THEM FOR CORRECTION."

THERE are periods of the world's history when nations seem to live through many ages in one. Those are times in which women must weep, whilst men's hearts bleed inwardly.

A period of this kind in Europe was the transition from the last century to the present. We who read the narratives of French revolution and French conquest, feel no surprise that, among those who saw such monstrosities, many lost their reason. Young heads grew grey in a single night; numbers of middle-class men and women became depraved,—sometimes even devilish. A like period in Palestine was that which culminated in the first fall of Jerusalem. It came slowly, as great horrors are wont to come. Prophet after prophet stood upon the tower of his

watch, to look for the day of the Lord. That day rose like the morning spread upon the mountains,—a dawn making darkness visible. They who thought and felt for their race asked eagerly, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" And sad is the soul of any human being whose inward eye sees farther than his fellows!

Let us try to picture for ourselves something of what the prophet Habakkuk saw;—saw, that is, in part with his bodily eye, and in part with the eye of his spirit. In these fields of vision he blended the prospect of two opposed cities—the one near, the other at a distance. He pictured them as their builders made them. He beheld them in their human life and moral meaning. He saw both as they would be when a few brief generations should have passed away.

The city to which the vision came was built upon a rock, and begirt by circling hills: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people." Between those hills were stony valleys with steep watercourses—the "wadies" of the East and of Spain. Behind stretched lonely downs, over which sheep heard their shepherd's voice and followed him to find green pastures. Elsewhere was the wilderness of crags and thickets; and amidst them one might be alone with the wild beasts. Eastwards, beyond the palm trees, flowed the stream that had been crossed by the pilgrim-fathers; and down it, where the limestone ridges are overlooked by high volcanic summits, lay a deep secluded vale. Here

slept the lake of desolation—the heavy waters of the Dead Sea.

The recollections, the anticipations, which these various scenes naturally awakened, I may leave to your imagination. One circumstance we will not forget. There was in the prophet's mind a "central point" round which every remembrance and every hope clustered: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, the city of the Great King." Not for site alone, nor for its own sake only, but because of its law of Right and Wrong: "For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David." And again, not of David only, nor yet only for Judah: "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Did this seem likely to be verified now?

From the mountain of the Lord's house you cannot descry the strongholds of the bitter and hasty Chaldee. But he comes, terrible and dreadful; and shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? Below yon dim horizon are the rolling plains which Abraham crossed, in search of a purer law and an heritage as yet unseen. Yonder glides the slow flood of yellowish water, on the far side of which Abraham's fathers served other gods. Beside it, and bestriding it, stood the city built by the might of Chaldean power, and for the honour of Chaldean majesty—the adversary and antitype of the City of David, and of God. Was this Babylon the seat of independent sove-

reignty at the time when the prophet spoke? If so, he foretold the end from the beginning. If not, he spoke like her who saw

> "The phantom of many a Danish ship,
> Where ship there yet was none."

However this may be, he must have felt as Dante* felt when he heard the words of that plaintive hymn —"O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance." And, like Dante, he wrote the lament of a nation which was socially lost because it had ceased to be morally alive.

In the prophet's day the law was slacked, and judgment did not go forth. Therefore the foreigner took the Hebrews in his net. They were made "as the fishes of the sea"—a lawful prey—creatures over whom there are rights, not men with rights of their own. They became "like the creeping things that have no ruler over them"—no ruler, that is, in any true sense—no man and ruler of men. These things the prophet saw. He saw *another* and a contrasted event to follow afterwards; but his eyes rested first on the moral and social degradation.

Such as he described was the fate of the peoples, nations, and languages, who came to the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon, to bow down before the greatest golden image the world had ever adored. The ears of the multitude were soothed by the sound of all kinds of music. Their souls were enthralled by the glittering emblem of Plutocracy, fittest of all

* *Purgatorio*, Canto 33.

emblems for great Babel, the city of merchant-princes, and lighted up (as we may picture it) by a sun bright as Napoleon's sun of Austerlitz. Certain of these strangers must needs weep tears of shame: captives themselves, and mourning over the captivity of their country's gods. They thought upon the conqueror's question, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand?" They thought upon his burning fiery furnace. They fell down and worshipped the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up: three men, and three men only, excepted.

These three were captives of the great king. Food, clothing, shelter, life,—all dependent upon his lightest word. Bitter is the exile's bread; but more poisonous the dainties tossed sometimes to the slave. Yet those slave-satraps—a small unthought-of few—fulfilled the foresight of the prophet. They practised what he preached, when he said, "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? *we* shall not die."

And this was the *second* event which our text places in antithesis with the first: a foretaste of the great victory which will-force should achieve over world-force; a symbol of Eternal Justice set over against the brief triumph of the covetous and violent Chaldee. Now, to what wisdom, to what principle of knowledge, or assent, shall we ascribe the prophet's words? To Faith? Yes: in the form under which they were uttered, and by virtue of the insight and foresight which spoke and wrote them, for a generation that should live at the end, just as the speaker

himself lived at the beginning. In this form, and with this kind of certitude when earthly events seemed adverse, they were Faith. In another form —shaped, that is, by the laws of thought, springing up from our human intuitions, an efflux of that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—in this other form, and resting on the primary beliefs of practical Reason, the very same words might have been true Philosophy. Does it sound strange to say Philosophy? I shall hope to show clearly in what sense and to what extent the assertion is true. Meantime, you may remember how a great poet—no distant neighbour to Oxford—repudiated the judgment of fools, and found Philosophy neither harsh nor unmusical. He believed her to be what he himself called her—Divine.

You may verify what I have said.

If in evil days you put the same questions to real Faith and to real Philosophy, the answers will coincide. Ask, for example, Must we be content to suffer in a righteous cause? Are we sure that our sorrows shall be turned into joy? No contradictory replies to these and such-like questions have ever been uttered by them of whom the world was not worthy. All have said the same thing—saint and sage, prophet and apostle, Socrates and Boethius—from the first Hebrew to the last Gentile of that noble army, that great cloud of witnesses, who died rather than speak or act a falsehood. A little incense on an idol altar was no large handful: but it was an infinite untruth! For this reason, and for one other reason, I have

chosen a verse of Old Testament prophecy to be the text of this Lecture, and to stand as a fit motto to the whole series. The one other reason I may as well state at the outset. It is this:—

The prophet spoke in foresight as well as in faith. What he said was a strong assertion not of what would be only, but of what *must* be; and it was meant to be received and acted on by those who should live when he and his generation had been gathered to their fathers. With a similar hope, although with immeasurably humbler credentials, I desire to dedicate this present course of Bampton Lectures to the youth of this University. In this wish I shall have, I am sure, the true-hearted sympathy of elder men. The things I am about to say are things which I myself, and those who think with me, cannot but feel and know to be unfailingly certain of their accomplishment. On the assurance of these eternal verities, we willingly rest our hopes for the solemn Hereafter. Being ourselves persuaded that there is no "peradventure" in the case, we desire to persuade others also.

Before all, to persuade the young. And this for the best of reasons. You, who listen to me this morning, will have no choice but to be sharers—some of you, possibly, prominent actors—in a vast crisis of affairs. Few educated persons who have watched the world for twenty years, can avoid a deep-felt conviction that one of the greater periods of change which befal civilized Europe is impending,—or, to speak more accurately, has begun: I will not say, "begun to

run its course," for such a phrase would savour of Fatalism. Let us hope that it may await the direction which brave hearts and manly heads shall impress upon it. Beyond a doubt, soon as always, the example of England will have much to do with the practical solution. Soon, as of old, Oxford will to a large extent influence England. It is Oxford's honest boast that hither come in numbers the flower and promise of English homes, and that few of the many remain and go away without knowing that Oxford has been to them a fresh home-circle of thought and purpose, whence all carry in turn aspirations and lasting memories. If you can but crown your lives here with true Amaranth, there will be no sorrow in the long remembrance.

Let me point out to you some evidences of the change which has set in :—

Seventeen years ago there was preached from this pulpit a series of Bampton Lectures one object of which was to show the failures of certain philosophies, and the mischievous tendencies of others. These lectures were much listened to, and more read. They excited a great deal of controversy. Amongst hostile critics some considered the lecturer unfaithful to philosophy itself. Other some were of opinion that he attached consequences to certain philosophical systems, *not* intended by their authors. In short, they questioned the equity of his interpretations.

I mention this unfriendly criticism solely with the view of impressing upon your minds one remark-

able fact. People in those days could scarcely credit the existence of a nineteenth century Atheism. Deism was a possibility,—so was Pantheism: but who ever knew an Atheist? What a change has come over us now! We have buildings set apart for the propagation of Atheism. There are journals devoted to its advocacy, or (as the writers think) its demonstration, in one at least of its shapes. I say, in one, because Mr. Stuart Mill divides Atheism into two forms: first, the dogmatic denial of God's existence; secondly, the denial that there is any evidence on either side, which (he adds), for most practical purposes, amounts to the same thing.

You may feel surprised at hearing any Atheists spoken of as Dogmatists; but French Positivism, in its early times, maintained that to assert Atheism was to dogmatize, and to show oneself a bigot. A person might as philosophically be a Theist as an Atheist. The right course was to assert that all knowledge on the subject is impossible. Parisians are, however, addicted to neatness of statement; and this may predispose them to Dogmatics. At all events, they made progress in the bigotry of Atheism. We have it on Communist authority that the Revolution of 1871 was atheistic. The same journal tells us that this fact was a sufficient reason, and constituted *the* reason, why the sacrifice of the Archbishop of Paris was urgently—nay, imperatively—demanded. "We," (said these Atheists,) "owe it to ourselves—we owe it to the world." The world *did* look on; but perhaps the Archbishop's murder may

not have altogether advanced the cause of dogmatic Atheism throughout the whole world.

In our own country, Dogmatism of this sort is upheld, amongst what may be termed the lower middle-class, by Fatalists. Nothing draws more rapturous plaudits from such an audience, in an atheistic lecture-room, than the plain assertion that man is a machine; that he is driven by natural law in the same sense that a splash of mud is thrown by a carriage-wheel. Whatever wickedness he does, the fault is in Nature, not in him. And he need not fear Retributive Justice. Retribution would in itself be unjust. Neither is there any life where justice can be done.

Amongst educated circles, dogmatic Atheism is best known by feeble imitations either of Strauss or of Haeckel. The former passed from sceptical Theology to the denial of Theism. The latter engrafted upon an extended evolution-system certain metaphysical theories, which landed him also in Atheism. Men belonging to either camp are usually bigots. One class tells us that belief in God is an outrage upon their religious feelings. The other describes all writers and speakers as unscientific idiots, if they reach any conclusion short of atheistic Mechanism.

I have said enough to show you that there is a change since 1858. Let me now direct your thoughts to the second kind of Atheism mentioned by Mr. Mill. It is by far the more widely spread, and is much more likely to gain influence in a country

which calls itself "practical." To say "There is no God" will be held by most people the saying of a fool or a dreamer of abstract dreams. But to say "There is no evidence that a God exists" is quite another thing. It saves the labour of some non-commercial reasoning; it serves as an apology for religious indifferentism.

A curious history attaches to this last mode of denying God. Rather more than a century ago, Scotland made France the present of an "Easy Philosophy." This was the name given by David Hume to his own system; and he meant to place it in contrast with more abstract reasonings which seriously attempt to determine, in one way or another, the great problems of thought and life. Hume's "Easy Philosophy" was an irony—a purely sceptical contribution to what was called the French Illumination. Compared with some other contributors, his ironies seem modest. Most here have no doubt heard the story of Hume's seventeen dinner companions, who accused Voltaire of narrowness because he was a Deist, while they themselves were Atheists. Hume died before the first French Revolution; therefore we cannot tell what its influence might have been upon his mind. But the remarkable point is this: when dogmatic Atheism fell into disrepute, Hume's Scepticism survived. Comte claimed him as his own ancestor, and endeavoured to requite this country for the gift bestowed on France. It was, of course, returned in a condition more systematic and less ironical.

It also underwent much development. Yet, as I have already noted, it was not dogmatic Atheism,—and thus far remained true to the sceptical standpoint. Still, the advance seems very considerable. Hume thought Deism a very *useful* doctrine. He asks one of his correspondents to help him with arguments in its favour. Comte thought belief in a Deity superfluous, and therefore he dispensed with it. He also dispensed with the idea of a personal life beyond the grave. In other words, he rejected both. I am obliged to speak in this way of his teaching, because he loved system as dearly as the most extreme dogmatizer. Consequently, in dispensing with these infinite beliefs, he did in fact renounce them. Thus, therefore, he forsook the truly sceptical position, and left to Hume the glory of continuing its best representative man.

Comte's gift of Positivism to England was not appreciated whole and entire, as he expected. One reason is, that in his later days he felt the need of something more emotional than cold systematization. A calendar of ceremonial observances was the result; and it alienated numbers among his disciples. Yet, what is now commonly called Positive *thinking* has leavened the minds of English-speaking men, here and in America, to an almost incredible extent. The advance over Hume has been also maintained. Let me give you one conclusive illustration of this fact.

The late Mr. Mill left behind him three remarkable essays, published since his decease. They clear up an enigma which had perplexed Mill's admirers.

He exercised a reserve on religious subjects which (to quote a safe authority) "perhaps even scandalized some of the more ardent and on-pressing spirits." In this posthumous publication are discussed the all-important beliefs in God and immortality. Mill does not allow them the position of beliefs. He characterizes them as hopes only, and adds many limitations. Still, *as* hopes, he advises us to cherish them. They are, in his view, contributions to individual happiness; they are also useful to mankind. Here, then, he resembles Hume. Now, for these cautious predilections Mill is held by his friends unfaithful to Positive thinking. He is pronounced guilty of aberrations as great as Comte's. His memory is mourned with a kind of contemptuous pity.

The surprise and disappointment expressed on this occasion by leaders of Positive thought, furnishes a fair index to what, in their opinion, is the logical outcome of their method. It would appear unable to tolerate even the modest hope that there exists a God, or that He reserves an immortality for men. Such is the attitude maintained by no unskilful advocacy. It brings to its advocates personal credit, praise, and pecuniary gain. What may be the next stage of its evolution—what the method portends to its disciples—are questions which people will answer differently, according to their estimate of certain other elements of change. As a rule, every crisis of thought and feeling which shakes traditionary beliefs will make, if it does not find, a corresponding crisis

in affairs. It so happens that, coincidently with the spread of Atheism and Scepticism, there is going on a vast social re-arrangement. The movement is not confined to England. On the contrary, it is felt by every civilized nation, from Russia, across Europe, to America, and so round the globe. For example, Germany is engaged with problems deliberated on by the Cecils of Queen Elizabeth's day. The heat of our own sixteenth century mind-friction blazed out into flames of genius. Philosophy, poetry, and religious thought so ennobled men's souls as to save our after-struggles from some stains of infamy which have disgraced other nations. Through the darkest of our dark days, national morality never became quite extinct. But I suppose the danger to us *now* lies in the coincidence I have pointed out. The set of thinking takes the less noble side as the trying time comes on,—just when the hour of social change is tolling what sounds in some ears a tocsin. Life is short; and if life in this world is held by change-lovers to be all that human beings can look for, the temptation to make the most of it by injustice, robbery, and wrong, is very great indeed. One obvious consideration may seem to counterbalance the dread. In this country events move slowly when they depend upon abstract indoctrination. Even Napoleon had a value for our absence of ideology. It may be, also, that the great heart of England will remain sound in its abhorrence of foul play. However these things turn out, we shall all agree upon one maxim—national, European, world-wide. There

can be no true progress for mankind, either physical or social, without a corresponding healthiness of moral insights and beliefs. And the reason is plain. If these are weakened, public opinion alters its current, or loses its vigorous tone; there is risk either way, and it is quite possible both risks may occur together.

In considering the peril of social change, it is not easy to forget that the disturbing idea of individual moral change is raised in every honest spirit—particularly every honest young spirit. Now, I am quite sure that disbelief of the kinds I have been describing must make a very great difference to any human being. Every one of you who has to choose his lot in life will choose, *if* he disbelieves, differently from the choice of a firm believer. And every one whose life is fixed will work out its perplexities differently. Of one fact you may, with me, feel confident. To be really good—a thing much greater than being sentimentally good—is a very hard choice for three-fourths of mankind. It is hard to be poor and honest; it is hard for better-off people not to requite crooked policy by crookedness; it is hard for every one to speak the truth: and we all know that justice is harder than generosity. When we think on these things, they bring to mind St. Paul's precept to "endure hardness." We remember also St. Peter's exhortation that Christians should be as "strangers and pilgrims,"—strangers from the immoralities and disbeliefs of a mixed world, *because* pilgrims to a purer world than this. But to act upon

these maxims, most of us want first to answer Pilate's question, "What is Truth?" If we feel a certainty, or probability, that social and individual goodness depends upon such and such beliefs, this is a very strong reason for investigating them. But the final aim of our investigation must be to discover whether they are ascertainably true.

I have now explained why it is that I feel in my inmost soul a deep longing and desire to make you companions in my own certitude. The problems I wish to discuss with you are amongst a small number of earnest problems to which we may accommodate the Socratic position—that wrong-doing and ignorance are identical. No man can be cold or half-hearted in respect of them, unless their true nature is more or less hidden from his eyes,—so paramount appears their ultimate issue.

Along with the first beginnings of history the vast debate began: Have moral Right and Wrong necessarily *opposite* issues? When Cain slew Abel, which was the better, the happier man? One of these, "being dead, yet speaketh." It is no less true that the question of Retribution, as at first mooted, turned upon consequences to follow in the life now present—upon joys and sorrows over which death draws a veil. A hoary head found in the paths of righteousness is a crown of glory; but the grey hairs of the violent, the unjust, and the treacherous shall be brought down to the grave with blood. Or, next, if the evil-doer escapes, "fret not thyself"—his children must be houseless, and beg their bread. Worst of all,

when birth-sin becomes the punishment of sin committed. The law of visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate God, is recognised in our nineteenth century as a biological law: it is called by the name of heredity. In England and elsewhere, philanthropists have been for some time at work devising reformatory schools and other institutions, to mitigate the social consequences of this direst of all known diseases. It is now found true, as it was at the era when the Second Commandment was written, that the degradation or loss of the spiritual idea of God is the hardest obstacle in the way of elevating crime-debased children to a higher moral sense. This heredity—this stern conception of Retributive Justice—is in our day a generalised fact of social science: it was accepted as an Article of Faith in the days of the Old Testament.

But, before the close of that ancient Canon, there was a visible widening of the horizon. The march of time brings with it a march of foresight. We individual men and women are all members of a body corporate. We can say, "This people is my people, and their God my God." The good or evil which is slow to drop upon ourselves, or our generation, will assuredly befall our race. And this wider conception is again conformable to the most modern doctrines of Sociology: "What the units are, that will be the aggregate." You cannot pile cannon-balls into the shapes you build cubes of granite. And in living forms there are forces, the function of which is to

resist disintegration. If, now, we imagine these turned into repellents—no longer uniting forces, but positively disuniting—we shall have a lively image of the effect of demoralised opinion. Class repels class; man flies off from man. A people whose inward life is sound survives outward attacks, times of misfortune, panic, and depression. A nation morally half-dead falls asunder. It has sown the wind; it shall reap the whirlwind.

The convictions reached, before life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel, were very strong. Put into calm English, they may be thus stated:—

There is substantive Right, and its contradictory is Wrong.

These two are for ever irreconcileable.

Right shall be crowned at last; Wrong shall be finally defeated.

Under all wrongful tyrannies the righteous might say, "Art Thou not from everlasting, mine Holy One? We shall not die." Throughout every kind of calamity he might keep a personal confidence:—

> "I will rejoice in the Lord,
> I will joy in the God of my salvation." *

If life itself became desperate, the righteous hath hope in his death; and the end of that man is peace. When St. Paul described the Christians' triumph, he made but a slight change in the message of Hosea:—

> "O death, I will be thy plagues;
> O grave, I will be thy destruction." †

* Hab. iii. 18. † Hosea xiii. 14.

And the first Church was consoled by the remembrance that, before themselves, "others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."*

I need not adduce parallels from the nobler classics. You will not easily forget why Antigone chose a living sepulchre: you have all read, or to speak truly, you have all seen, the Furies of Orestes. They portray the eternal laws which Socrates desired to meet with a quiet conscience. *Therefore* he stayed in prison, and was content to drink the hemlock. Nay, more,—he enjoined a sacrifice to Æsculapius, whose cup cured that disease with which the unmoral atmosphere of Athens had oppressed him.

We all feel how, in the Socratic tragedy, there is an approach to the New Testament.

We feel, too, that the Christian idea of Retribution is altogether emancipated from the limitations of the ancient Theocracy. It rests upon the distinct facts, that here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. The individual believer is taught to look broadly upon life, and to know, for a certainty, that temporal power and prosperity are very far indeed from being indications of the favour of his God. For example, in those days the Roman Empire had its course to run, and during that period there remained to it the golden sceptre, the iron sword, the purple vestment,—even though the sceptre was an instrument of unlawful tyranny, and though sword and vestment both were dyed with blood.

* Heb. xi. 35.

Neither could the Christian expect to be above his Lord,—that Man of Sorrows, to Whose image a predestined conformity was, for each one, the strongest assurance of his hope. Being reviled, he was not to revile again; being persecuted, he was to suffer it—committing himself to Him that judgeth righteously. But let emperors and peoples, gainsayers one and all, tremble! For they must, one and all, stand before a judgment-seat, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good *or* bad.

This, then, is the New Testament answer to the two main questions which are for ever agitating the great heart of Humanity. A life is set before us which its worst despisers must admit to be brotherly, pure, noble, sublime. How these Christians love one another! How faithful they are to their Leader, Christ! They despise riches, torments, pleasures, death! Can we, think you, look back and say that their life was not only sublime, but happy? What is the verdict of you who are here this morning? Would you give the *bene vivere* of our old friend Terence for an Apostolic *Euthanasia*, together with an *Athanasia* to follow? The most Platonizing of English bishops thought of the life which now is, when weighed against that which is to come, as of a single night passed at a wayside inn. The Port Royalist exclaimed, "Let us labour and suffer; we have all eternity to rest in." One who, fighting with wild beasts, was a spectacle to angels and men, reckoned "that the sufferings of this present time

are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Why should I say more? Most of you have asked your own hearts how far you could count it all joy to endure hardships; and whatever your feeling was, or is, upon the subject, you will have seen that the Christian choice is essentially a *waiting* for the Unseen. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. The event is certain, but the harvest is not immediate; neither to sinner, nor yet to saint! A great thinker, who thoroughly knew the world, observed, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." * Christianity has not annihilated the delay; and no doubt it still forms the real cause why, when a Christian reasons with men upon righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, so few omit an "almost" from their conclusion.

Is it not repeating an obvious truth, to remark that both in excluding the "almost," and also as regards each practical element of the true life pictured by St. Paul, Philosophy—if not falsely so called—will always coincide with Faith? But the philosophic ideal is not a Person—it is a maxim; the philosophic persuasion is not a supra-rational assent—it is a reasoned-out conviction. Still, in both Faith and Philosophy, the conclusion is an act of Will: an act so determinate and so complete that our whole being goes forth in it. For Philosophy, as well as for Faith, this

* Ecclesiastes viii. 11.

volition includes the deliberate choice of a satisfying future, over a present which is felt, at best, to be inadequate,—incommensurate, that is, with the vast longing of Humanity. The same choice implies that present happiness is not looked upon as necessarily the lot of the righteous. The delay of judgment, the stay of execution, counted by the unbeliever as "slackness," is an admitted factor of moral proof concerning the Eternal "*must be.*" It is also an aid to demonstration in the highest school of Philosophy —the science (that is to say) of Natural Religion.

It seems worthy of remark, that there exists one book of the Old Testament,—a most puzzling book to the majority of commentators,—which makes this patience of saints and sages the subject of a religious dialectic. In the eyes of his censors, Job, the Eastern chieftain, appeared a guilty man, brought down by his sins (pride among the rest) to a dunghill and a potsherd; even as we see the haughtiest of Chaldee despots suffering for his boastfulness, after the manner of a frenzied dervish. The king was driven from men, his body wet with the dews of heaven; and his understanding departed from him. Job retained his understanding, held fast his integrity, and asserted that "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure;"* whilst "the just upright man is laughed to scorn."† For, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"‡ Out of the whirlwind God answers Job, and teaches him a lesson of diffidence in the presence

* Job xii. 6. † *Ibid.* 4. ‡ *Ibid.* ii. 10.

of the Incomprehensible. Yet God decides against his antagonists, because "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath."*

In other words, Job maintained the theory of Divine government by general laws; and, while every phrase and every figure is redolent of the far East, he argues like a philosophic reasoner, or a modern Christian moralist. Perhaps we shall be right in saying that this book and Ecclesiastes are the two Scriptural documents which occupy most nearly the standpoint of Natural Religion. Job in his agony—the Preacher in his disappointment—fix their eyes upon the God who made Orion and the Pleiades,—the God who appointed human life and human labour. They inquire what relation He bears to us in our hours of sorrow, and when the years come in which we shall each of us say, "I have no pleasure in them." And this is the side of Natural Religion which commands the attention of most men, even when half-indifferent. Again, the very fact that these two writers argue, instead of teaching dogmatically, gives them a very peculiar position. They are, for both reasons, adapted to minds clouded over by the part-sad, part-angry spirit engendered by the attrition of a jagged life which seems to lead no-whither,—likewise by that kind of autumnal feeling certain to descend upon us all when we burn our dead leaves. At such times of pause and remembrance, men who scarcely expect a syllable of answer never refrain from asking, "Can there be satisfaction for human

* Job xlii. 7.

longings beyond the grave?" and, "Is there a final distinction between the just and the unjust?"

Now both these are very principal problems of Natural Religion. And I have dwelt on the peculiar aspect of two canonical books, because the method of inquiry to be pursued in this course of Lectures compels us to leave on one side the region of dogmatic teaching, and to proceed as the writers of Job and Ecclesiastes proceed. Our reasoning must stand upon other grounds than received doctrines, in order that it may be allowed its rank among evidences and scientific arguments. We must therefore treat these two great problems, and the problems they make inevitable, in the light of open questions, to be thought out by men for whom they are matters of Life and Death.

You will perceive that we are entering on a wide field of inquiry. Lest it should seem vague or indefinite, let us set a mark on the horizon where we hope to find the meeting-point of earth and heaven. This point is the Doctrine of Retribution. For, if it be a truth of the moral law that Right and Wrong are correlated by Good and Evil, and must severally bear their respective fruits at last, we may even now take up our parable and say, "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."* But "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth."† That is to say, there *is* a final distinction between the just and the unjust. There

* Psalm xcvii. 11. † Prov. xi. 7.

really is a satisfaction for human longings beyond the grave. Retributive Justice, although delayed, is not uncertain. The moral axiom upon which Retribution rests—the moral law by virtue of which it comes to pass—are as sure and as unerring as the firmest principles and most absolute laws of Nature. This may be termed our Fact-knowledge of the Doctrine of Retribution. It may safely be so termed, because Morality is (as I shall endeavour to show) not only one human fact, but *the* human fact of our universe.

To a Theist, Retributive Justice appears evidently enrolled among the attributes of God. For the God in whom he has placed his trust is the *Moral* Sovereign of the whole Cosmos. If we believe in His existence, we believe that justice *must* be done. And if not done in this life, *then* must there exist some other sphere in which God shall bring every work into judgment. Therefore, he that feareth the Lord is bidden to "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God." Whereas to the self-deceived unrighteous it is said, "This shall ye have of mine hand: ye shall lie down in sorrow." * Hence we see how different roads converge to the same point; and in this main belief, underlying Natural Religion, the Moral Philosopher and the Natural Theist—if I may thus speak—both meet and agree.

Here, however, we must carefully observe that Natural Religion is by no means identical with Natural Theology. "There was never miracle," says

* Isaiah l. 10, 11.

Bacon, "wrought by God to convert an Atheist; because the light of Nature might have led him to confess a God." To record the truths discerned by this light is the business of the Natural Theologian. He registers them with the object of leading Man to the confession of a God. Yet for this light to shine, it is necessary that Man should (in Baconian phrase) consider himself as Nature's "*minister et interpres*"; he should wait upon Nature with a loving eye, and translate her meaning into human thoughts. To succeed in his translation, Man must take with him the fact that he is not only Nature's interpreter, but Nature's *interpretation*—her "word-book." The rule of knowledge, as well as of Being, appears absolute, —that every higher thought, every higher existence, must explain lower thoughts and lower existences. This rule would seem to be *the* truth involved in the Positive Philosophy of Comte—the vital germ in his systematizing. How far that growing point has been fairly developed by Positivism, is a different question, and foreign to our inquiry. Whatever may be thought on this subject, none will doubt that Man is visibly this world's highest fact. In him, therefore, and by correlating him with the world he inhabits, we shall find its most certain explanation. Linked in a thousand ways to the world, yet differing manifestly from it—in the world, yet not truly of the world—Man is (so to speak) the great supra-natural element discoverable in Nature. In this spirit, Job turns his human eye upon the starry heavens, and infers from their glory and beauty the invisible things

of God. In this same spirit, the Preacher examines human nature itself, and concludes, "Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the Whole of Man."* St. Paul unites both preacher and patriarch. He maintains that what may be known of God is manifest both in and unto mankind. His invisible things are shown us visibly. We may ourselves feel after and find the Lord. Such, then, is the utterance of Natural Theology, and upon such grounds it speaks.

Natural Religion, as strictly defined and distinguished from Natural Theology, does not need to ask the previous question, "Is there indeed a God?" In reasoning out its principles, we may proceed along very separate paths. One is to assume the conclusions of Natural Theology, and argue from them to the relations which they determine, the duties they impose, and the feelings they excite, when Man is viewed as standing in the presence of his God. This is the easiest way of conducting the discussion; but it is not to all minds a method the most satisfactory. Another path sets out from the truth of Moral Distinctions, and leads to the establishment and definition of the doctrine of Retributive Justice, as well as of the law of its ultimate development. You will not fail to observe that, if the truth of Retribution be thus established, Natural Theology gains a fresh and confirmatory evidence. And such a result is too valuable to be neglected in planning the method of these Lectures.

On the whole, it appears advisable to adopt a line

* Ecclesiastes xii. 13.

of reasoning which unites in itself the advantages of the two paths just indicated. It will be my endeavour to rest the conclusions of Natural Religion—and above all, its main and most essential doctrine—upon the truths of Pure Morality. But from time to time, and at various landing-places of the argument, it will be wise to compare them with the positions which a Theist must needs occupy in regard of the questions at issue.

For example :—

A Theist has answered for himself the question, "Is there indeed a God?" Upon the grounds justifying this answer, and upon other correlated grounds, the advocate of Natural Religion may take his stand. The inquiries he may thus put to his consciousness are such as these: What difference does the known existence of a God make to us men? What is there in our nature manifestly responsive to the demands made upon us by a belief in One Who is Divine? Is our life now present marked by the capabilities of such higher things as are suggested by so much as we can perceive of His Nature? And does human life bear the impress—or does it not—of aspiring towards that nobler elevation which will bring us nearer to Himself?

Concerning every one of these questions the Moral Philosopher may ask: How far do the naturally resulting answers agree with the conclusions which I have already reached by arguing from the truth of Moral Distinctions? There is, indeed, every reason to expect that the comparison will show an absolute

coincidence between the results of the Moralist and those of the Natural Theologian. And this coincidence is likely to be most clear and complete respecting the greatest of human concerns—the tenet of Retribution. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil. He cannot look on iniquity. Therefore the righteous shall not die.

From both the comparison and the conclusion, you will draw another most important inference. Natural Religion differs very widely from Natural Theology in the fact that it is not an abstract, but an *applied* Philosophy of Theism. As befits practical science, I shall, consequently, employ the simplest order and kinds of reasoning, stated in the least technical sort of language. And I shall venture to vary the terms I apply to mental and moral phenomena, much as they would be varied by any one engaged in ordinary conversation. This plan will, I think, yield the most intelligible mode of expression, and also the best means for avoiding the mischief attaching itself to real or imaginary connotations.*

* If any one wishes to understand the risks of *connotation*, and how much may, by its aid, be alleged against doctrines thus construed and misconstrued,—let him read Mr. Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Psychology," Part VII. chap. iii.

Few thinkers, probably, will consider all Mr. Spencer's connotings tenable. He supposes, for instance, that the idea expressed by the personal pronoun "I," must necessarily connote the thought of a "Thou." Such an altruism—as Comte would call this thought—such a remembrance of his neighbour ever present to every egoist, may hold scientifically true in Sanscrit Philology: it may be practically true in the golden rule of Christianity. But is it true for common life, or in any current system of Philosophy?

To this distinction between Natural Theology and Natural Religion, you will add one further inference. Their contrast is broadest on the emotional side. The evidences adduced by the Natural Theologian excite wonder, veneration, faith. But Natural Religion is Man's incense,—the incense of his spiritual Being sent up from earth to heaven. Without this incense from Nature's interpreter, the world he explains must be so far silent that no voice speaking from hence could confess the existence of a God. The song of the birds in our English hedgerows, the myriads of sounds which pervade those vast American forests where Man's foot has never trod,—these, one and all, in their countless varieties, are the expression of animal enjoyment, animal affection, and animal life, in their wonderfully diversified phases. It is true that Man likes poetically to depict the lower creation as it were in full sympathy with himself. He imagines that even mists and vapours, when they rise at the blush of morning, may be participants of his adoration, fellow-worshippers before the eye of Him Whom he desires to praise. Yet, in solemn truth, it is not so. The inexhaustible beauty, the indescribable loveliness of the world we look upon, may aid our human reason in its delineation of God—may make our human heart swell at the mention of His name. In this sense, the whole creation does truly join with us; but Man alone can give voice to the sublime idea. It is his tongue, his divine power of speech, which must utter the truth that there exists a God who is our Sovereign, our Father, and our Judge.

Our Judge! This is the crown which Natural Religion places on the moral doctrine and law of Retribution. For the rightful power and administration of Retributive Justice are thus centered in a sublime Personality. "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow."* For, "a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation." † These texts coincide with our human idea of Retribution. We do not conceive of it as merely the *bestowal* of happiness upon Virtue; but rather as the *setting right* that which is morally wrong. He, therefore, who administers Retributive Justice, appears in our eyes as in all ways the opposite of arbitrary. On the one side, He is no respecter of persons; on the other hand, He is no vindictive executioner. To smite or give justly is to be just. And shall not the Judge of all the whole world do right? ‡

There is, we may observe, a tie between men of ruth and pity, such as that felt by the Indian chief who petitioned for death by scourging, rather than the white stranger, though justly condemned, should suffer it. This emotion, seldom eradicated, except amongst the ministrants of superstitious torture, barbarian, pagan, or papistical, makes true Retribution sorrowful to the Judge. Our Oxonian Talfourd wept, whilst the criminal he sentenced to die only smiled. Talfourd did his duty at the cost of suffering to himself. Had he stood by and seen the murderous deed,

* Deut. x. 18. † Psalm lxviii. 5.

‡ Compare Gen. xviii. 25 with Rom. iii. 6.

he would with just resentment have felled its perpetrator to the ground. Both these cases—the judgment painfully pronounced, and the vengeance which might have been easier—form examples of purely Retributive Justice.

We have thus cleared ourselves a way by which to approach and gaze upon the real lineaments of Justice,—Justice embodied in the law which lends to Death his terror and his sting. Those lineaments may be stern, but we are sure they must also be sorrowful; for they are a living Image graven on our nature by the finger of One who desireth not the death of a sinner. "Turn ye, turn ye: why will ye die?"* The great and good are apt to confess with sorrow that they have outraged the law of Nature and of God. But how often is that law outraged, without any compunction, by those of us who are neither great nor good?

We have likewise arrived at the ideal of Divine Mercy. By no means capricious, but just, or as men speak, austere: yet not without traits of what we call human tenderness. He, Whom we darkly behold, is not inaccessible to the pleas of oppressed sorrow or of inevitable ignorance. His quality of Mercy is not strained, but droppeth like the gentle dew from Heaven. Because not strained, but the utterance of Equity, it is reconcileable with Justice. Or rather, we may say it is the highest, purest Justice.

The importance—the exceeding utility and worth attaching to this view of the Divine judgment—

* Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

may reasonably appear to transcend all powers of estimation. If it be true, how vast the truth, since this selfsame truth naturally appertains to all worlds of Being like our own! How great its value to our world, may be seen by reflecting on the influence it ought to exercise over our moral destinies; and, according to the law by which moral destinies rule physical destinies, we must add, over our *whole* destination—the whole history of our future and final development. Take, for example, the social crisis through which, as I have said, European civilization—nay, the entire civilized world—is passing. For many years past men have heard much respecting an internecine war between Religion and Philosophy. A war this, which has lingered on with many and various alternations. It has shown itself incapable of decision, and, by the very conditions of the combat, it may be thought necessarily interminable. Neither belligerent power seems able to make peace within its own territory. Religion has been split into factions ranging from Sacerdotalism to Rationalism, and these two extremes are even now active elements in its character. The divisions of Philosophy are not less fatal; they are probably more profound. On the one side transcendental beliefs strive to feed their pristine fires: on the other side we have the dim lights, the restricted powers of phenomenology. An outlook this latter, not reaching beyond the threescore and ten years of mortal life, and therefore possessing no hold upon affections which claim to be immortal.

So far as the vision of a purely philosophic thinker can extend, no approach can be made—at least in our day—towards a decision of the momentous contest, save and except through the Doctrine of Retribution. In this one doctrine there seems to be life and hope. And the reason is plain: this doctrine is the issue of a line of thought which must exercise a chastening as well as an invigorating effect upon *both* contending parties.

It denies the name of true Philosophy to any system which does not assert amongst its foundation principles a severe and independent Morality. It refuses to admit the possibility of any real Religion, if divorced from the unbroken sovereignty of moral maxims. For it maintains that moral Truth known, practised, and attained, is our appointed human pathway to a sphere of knowledge which is truly Divine. So that when we speak of Humanity our speech enfolds within itself Theology. And in this spirit St. Paul views the Law as our religious as well as our disciplinary schoolmaster.

Such then is the scope and aim of our high argument. Its conduct may be summarily characterized.

My first step must be to depict in some concrete way what manner of thing is absolute Morality. This must be so done as to manifest the "why" of human action. And, along with it, must be shown by what necessary consequence the "why" of action may determine the "how," together with its most dominant circumstantials. These points will make up the subject of my next Lecture.

Amongst them, one point will stand out pre-eminently clear above all the rest—the belief in a futurity of moral distinctions. Retributive Justice to be influential must be inevitable; to be supreme it must be absolute. We cannot acquiesce in it as a permissible tenet, a thought of what may be, and would be excellent, if true,—a hope dear to us as a cherished emotion, and beautiful as a moral sentiment. Our ordeal is too rough, the battle of life too stern, for such an acquiescence to endure that Cross on which, as on an altar, must be offered human flesh and blood, broken bodies, and souls into which the iron has entered. An æsthetic belief may, for its loveliness' sake, be dear—almost as the drops which visit our sad heart. But suppose that heart is to be pierced—bruised to powder—burned away in a slow-consuming furnace of affliction: then, if Morality be anything *less* than insight and knowledge, the victim will feel that he dies as he has lived; that he has lived as he was born—in vain! Whatever is strong, good, and safe to live by and to die by, must be the very life-blood of our nature as Men; whatever else we think or feel, this we must know and possess. Or, to speak more truly, it must possess us. *So* possess us, that we may be conscious of our human inability to liberate our own Being, and, therefore, our Future from its enduring domination. A power from time to time made present to our conscience now,—a power which we feel will continue present always.

It is on grounds of this kind that we determine

how to act under circumstances of deep trial, when our moral constancy becomes the subject of some crucial experiment. And in this manner the "why" of moral sanctions determines the "how" of choice and activity.

Next in order, fairness seems to demand that we should enquire into the main characteristics of such objections as are likely to be urged against this line of thought. The enquiry need not be long. In modern day, one definite character pervades them all. They deny or doubt Man's power of attaining transcendental truth. According to the strength of the doubt entertained is the thoroughness of denial. The objections themselves, therefore, when put into words, assume different shapes, and are described by different appellations. But, running through them all, we may observe an ascending scale of *Phenomenalism.* It rises step by step, from the diffused Positive thinking which tinctures so many of our serials, up to full-formed and systematic Scepticism.

Attempts have been made to place Natural Science in antagonism with transcendental beliefs. They have failed (as we shall see) for two reasons. One, that no science is possible without some universal principles which are its laws; and that all universals transcend experience. The other reason is, that the noblest enlargements of our scientific territory are neither verified nor verifiable, as phenomenalists and Positive thinkers assume to be the case. On this subject I shall hope to show that a number of writers upon whom Mr. Mill's Theism jars ungently, have

mistaken, or at all events have misrepresented, the Natural Science *indagatio veri* as practised by our greatest authorities in this country.

Contrariwise, the Philosophy to be maintained in these Lectures asserts the existence of a Truth-power in Man, capable of apprehending a moral antithesis of Right and Wrong so axiomatic and so absolute as to carry with it, by consequence, the reality of other transcendental truths. Now the most stringent mode of testing any system or idea is, after presenting it in outline, to take it to pieces and put it together again. When taking it to pieces we try its principles one by one, just as if we were sounding separate pieces of railway iron-work, to see that all is in travelling trim. Whilst putting it together again we examine into the coherence of these tried principles, and consider whether they authorise our conclusion.

The former part of this process suggests several methods of trying each separated principle of Thought. One is to see *what* difference must be made by the absence of each, suppose we agree to deny or so far doubt its validity as to make its elimination appear our necessary result. It may be found that to eliminate this same truth means in effect to turn all truth out of doors. An example good and apt will come before us in my third Lecture. Deny the laws of knowing, and you make knowledge impossible. Therefore you cannot know that the belief against which you argue is untrue. If any one affirms its truth you must let him alone; you at least have no right to deny it. For in every step of your denial

you employ a law or principle which you have already denied. In point of fact you have by implication denied yourself. And to be without the power of knowing anything is to cease from being a man.

This consequence—a *reductio ad absurdum*—shows us that knowledge—the fact, I mean, of knowing any kind of truth—affirms the existence of some truth-power in Man. And this proof of its existence is easily confirmed by the history of speculative thought. For instance, both Kant and Hume equally asserted that universal truth and necessary truth are foreign as ideas from Sensation; it is impossible that they can ever be given us by any amount of experience. As we have said, and shall distinctly see, mathematical and modern science comprehend such truth. They find it there where alone it can be found—in streams springing out from that fontal well—the truth-power which is a dotation and heir-loom of Humanity.

The moment these words are uttered, one is strongly tempted to reflect upon the first birthplace and descent of such a power as this. But all similar reflections I must steadily avoid. My business is to investigate facts, and, as far as I can, to describe their real nature, their significance, and philosophic interpretations. Collateral reflections, however fairly deducible, I must leave to the learned leisure of my auditors.

In pursuing the proposed investigation, I shall, for clearness' sake, place the kinds and degrees of doubt already characterized side by side with my own

affirmative arguments. The comparison, or perhaps I should say the contrast, will illustrate as well as test every step of the putting-together process. It will also, I am afraid, cause some strain upon both your memory and your attention.

Among these contrasts, the sharpest is the one to which allusion has been made: I mean, of course, philosophic Scepticism. The self-contradiction intellectually involved in it has now been briefly noted, but deserves much more extensive illustration. This I shall attempt to give in the course of my third Lecture.

There is another way of looking at the contrast. Scepticism is inconsistent with firm moral beliefs, because it denies all real knowledge—all truth, and all truth-power. It does so on alleged speculative grounds. During the earlier phases of its speculations it puts Morality out of sight, but saps the foundations of the moral code as it goes on. The sap itself would, in an argumentative point of view, convince no reasoner; for it consists simply of questionable observations upon human life,—such as the supposed dead-level of society; the absence of moral differences between man and man; nay—what seems more important still—the absence of any tangibly great difference between men and animals. Yet, points of this kind will gain credence when intellectual truth is conceived unattainable, when human Reason has been degraded into perception and recollection—a sense of proximity, of similarity, of sequence,—and beyond these small

powers little or nothing. But if it can be shown, on the contrary side, that to degrade Reason ends in the self-confutation of the argument employed in its degradation,—that Scepticism becomes at last philosophic suicide,—*then* the intellectual sceptic is silenced, and, in the enforced silence of speculation, Morality must resume its sway. For the world cannot go on without its working movements, its powerful springs and levers. Let practical truth be denied, and Morality be reduced to convention, then, *pari passu*, peoples and nations become herds of human animals. Man's nature, like brute nature, becomes visibly red in tooth and claw. The absoluteness of moral axioms is historically verified at the cost of many sorrows. It was so when Jerusalem fell. It has been so throughout two great French revolutions.

The next ground principle of our Philosophy is that Moral Truth must, in its own nature, be true for us, and for all beings constituted like ourselves. One whole Lecture * will not be too much for the enunciation of this principle. I shall examine the moral First-truth in connexion with other axiomatic principles inalienable from the human mind. Hence you will perceive how impossible it is to ostracize Morality without obliterating the character and constitution of Humanity.

In order that this important pivot of my argument may obtain sufficient illustration and verification, I shall next endeavour to demonstrate that, among all

* The Fourth.

the attributes specifically distinctive of Man, Morality is the one most ascertainably pre-eminent. And I confess myself unable to conceive a stronger verifying process than this. For no fact can be more evident or less disputable than that no amount of metaphysical refining, no subtle theories of science can ever take us out of ourselves, or make us cease to be men. To attempt so hopeless a task, is to put out our natural eyes in the expectation of getting new ones. Or, we may liken it to an endeavour after more just views of things carried out by applying an eye to the wrong end of a refracting telescope. It is right and good for us to correct the idiosyncracies of individuals. We may appeal from them to the proper attributes of the human species. We may on all occasions make due allowance for the "personal equation,"—and I ought to add for the tribal and popular equation also. In fine, we may, or rather we must, "keep ourselves from idols," and abjure the "*lumen madidum*" for the "*lumen siccum.*" The one is a shadow-haunted phantasy,—the other pure practical Reason. But we must remember that to be practical it must be pure in more than one respect. Pure, not only as we speak of pure speculative Reason, but morally purified and unspotted. We can hope nothing from Thought overclouded by prejudice or partiality; we can hope nothing from a soul steeped in sensuality or sloth.

To realize pure, because purified, human truth, is the aim of a Philosophy which does not seek its purpose by listening to the Tempter's voice, "*eritis*

sicut Dei"; but, by patient investigation of what is knowably true to us as men. Knowable, that is, by our highest attainable reach of Reason distinguishing us most obviously from brutes. Ascertainable, also, by its conformity to our essential manhood, in its breadth and length. Verifiable, by its conformity with the law of our nobler progress; a law written on our moral natures, and repeated in our history.

From what I have said it will be seen that my fourth Lecture, with which this line of thought commences, is almost entirely constructive. As to the rest—the remaining moiety of the whole course—I must be brief; for those Lectures do not as yet exist even in outline. Their general plan will be to show that the moral first-ground cannot be maintained apart from the assertion of a future life after death and a final distinction in the destiny and development of good and evil men. This assertion constitutes what may be called the *transcendental* element in the doctrine of Retribution. Real Utilitarianism leads to its affirmation as a reasonable hope and probability. Independent Morality asserts it as a fact made imperative on human belief. Whilst the putting-together process goes on, I shall endeavour, at each step of the argument, to prove that a morality of this kind, independent in its code, transcendental in its issues, necessitates a Religion. This religion is rightly called *natural;* because in arguing the question of religious Evidence it stands *prior in thought* to *supra*-natural religion; and is founded, as a logical system, on the characteristic

attribute of Humanity. At the close of each Lecture, therefore, the step gained in Moral Philosophy will be viewed as a step gained in religious knowledge; and will constitute, if you please, each Sermon's practical application. I shall also venture on confirming my conclusions, by paralleling them with the conclusions of Natural Theism. These will be deduced from the principle that, so soon as the existence of a God is made known to us, we cannot but discern that our race must have certain determinable relations with Him.

As to the arguments. It will be right, first, to demonstrate that the moral antithesis or axiom is truly and properly *Human*. One great proof to be employed results from a contrast of Man's nature with purely animal nature. It is needful to state this proof distinctly, because so much has been said lately on the *resemblances* between men and animals, that the undeniable facts of *contrast* may seem to have slipped out of mind.

A comparison of the moral—that is, the truly human axiom—with the axiomatic principle of Induction will, next, show us that the former claims a certitude of equal, or, to ourselves, of superior strength. It is also more verifiable than the procedure of applied Science. Hence we infer a vast and solemn lesson. The law of Nature's uniformity carries in itself a forecast of Nature's dissolution. The law of absolute Morality prophesies human permanence when material nature undergoes that tremendous transformation.

I shall try to compress these related topics into one Lecture—my fifth.

Another subject, however, and a much broader one, underlies the comparison between men and animals. From age to age one mournful idea rises afresh upon Thought's troubled sea. Human nature and brute nature cannot be very widely dissociated, because both have their whole ground of being in the entity of inanimate nature. This conception in repeating itself puts on different garbs suited to its several re-appearances. With the advance of physical science, it has overpassed the mud of ancient Nile, and the time

"Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris." *

It has swept through many geological periods of life,—and across periods void of life. It strives to connect Man with the first substratum of the palpable Universe—luminous matter, endowed with motion, governed by immanent law, and destined to unfold itself not only into worlds but their inhabitants; into all that lives, thinks, feels, fears, suffers, rejoices, doubts, disputes, or believes. This is a really systematized Materialism; and we are compelled to ask, How does its possibility admit of being tested? The answer appears equally short and simple. By its Law.

To examine this mechanical hypothesis must be the business of my next, that is, my sixth Lecture. In law lies the essence of the whole proof or disproof. If there be an affinity or likeness, not a contrast or antagonism, between the law of material Nature and the law of Man's Nature, then our Faith in Man's

* Horace, *Sat.* i. 3, 99.

survival beyond bodily decay is, as Mr. Mill reckons it, a "hope" rather than a belief. If, furthermore, any Theist or Natural Theologian has attempted to build his system in the manner Mill censures,—either by a deification of Nature and her law, or by a denial of the misery and evil existing under Nature's dominion, and as a consequence of her mechanism,—such a systematizer must have forgotten or ignored the words of one who is the greatest amongst Natural Theologians: "The creature was made subject to vanity." *

The antitheses to Nature and Nature's law are moral insight, duty, holiness; to live and to die for and in God. But when we state the full truth to ourselves, a practical question arises, than which few are more serious,—very few indeed more perplexing. The question runs thus:—How can Man hope in his life and heart to overcome the antagonism which he encounters? to be in the natural world, yet not of that world? to use it, not as bound by its law, but as its sovereign, according to his own free will and for his own human purposes? I shall attempt to remove this perplexity, which so deeply saddened Mill, by no sort of theorizing, but by a matter-of-fact solution. We may *know* that this world is not our all. And this knowledge cuts the web which Nature-worshippers call destiny and fate. Nay—our Race has seen men of like passions with ourselves who have attained this knowledge, and have lived and died in its light and strength. And in their lives and

* Romans viii. 20.

deaths the unmoral contrarieties of Nature are transfigured into a discipline, a holiness, and a crown. For no truth can be more certain than this:—If our human immortality is the triumphant sphere of Man's perfected moral evolution, then the knowledge of such an immortality must be an aid and incentive to present moral endeavours. It must assist and comfort us in the arduous soul-development imperatively required by Man's Conscience.

With the conclusion of my sixth Lecture, enough may seem done to satisfy the requirements of Moral Philosophy in general. Enough, too, for elucidating the doctrine of Retribution with which we have specially interested ourselves. But we must not forget that the reason why we are thus interested consists in the fact that Retribution has appeared to us the horizon-point where Earth and Heaven meet together. In plain words, it marks the inosculation of independent Morality—the morality of purified right Reason—with the tenets and maxims of Natural Religion. The former tells us, with the emphasis of an absolute law, that the performance of much that is often irksome, and sometimes extremely painful, is a "*must be*" imperative upon the human Being as contra-distinguished from the human Animal. The latter tells us that a religious conviction, which ought to be distinguished from the moral sense of duty or Rightness, is also a birth-gift and heir-loom of Humanity.

In my seventh Lecture I shall desire to show that both these propositions are practically true. For this

purpose I shall venture upon two enquiries which are prudently shunned by every person who writes merely to build up a system,—who argues, that is, for an unmoral victory. You will, I hope, feel as I do, a desire to follow after Truth as far as we can, even though our gains may seem fragmentary; and, like explorers in a land stretching its limits far beyond human ken, we can only estimate each real step in the search by a valuation of its separate and intrinsic worth. For practical use—*the* one test of working Power—it will be expedient to show that the "why" of moral duty is not an otiose but a fruitful principle,—that it guides honest minds to the "how" of action. And this connection between the *sanction* and the *method* of moral right-doing must form my first subject of enquiry. The second will be of an equally practical character. It appears right that the same moral law should be viewed under a religious aspect, because one proper characteristic of independent Morality is that, whilst arising from an insight into truth, it affords also a *test* of truth. Never, indeed, could it become an evidence of true Religion, were it not a touchstone of religions falsely so-called. The religious man regards it as a law divinely written on the heart; it cannot, therefore, be at variance with any other Divine law. But it may be much at variance with the law of teachers who make God's commandments of none effect by their tradition. Now if this be true, it must follow that religious duty and moral law will harmonize; they will be at one. Whether viewed morally or

religiously, our duty to our neighbour will be found altogether one. Our duty to God will to a certain extent—so far, that is, as God is naturally knowable—be one. The proof and illustration of this harmony, this *at-oneness* of independent Morality and Natural Religion, ought to be elicited from an examination of the conditions under which we are required to do our duty. Are they such as to coincide with our conception of God? Of a Being, I mean, conceived by us not in the light of a Judge only, nor a Sovereign only, but also of a Father and a Friend?

No enquiry can be more solemn or more anxious. Were this life all, it would have to be answered in the negative. But if the moral law be absolute, if the doctrine of Retribution be a truth, *then* this life is not all; it is *knowably* the reverse of all, and the external conditions of duty with which it surrounds us are neither harsh nor inappropriate to pilgrims of hope and patience. And the same is true of the internal conditions of duty, the laws of volition and soul-development. In this respect, God has, indeed, provided some better thing for us. He has not only made a way of escape from temptation, but has also given us, even now amidst temptations, the victory. He has done this by consolidating the innermost of social ties, by conferring on Man the means of entering into the closest and most powerful bands of union and communion; the strength of which is correlative to his own dangerous weaknesses. And looking into this Divine institution as into a mirror where Almighty Goodness has glassed itself, we see that our human

idea of absolute duty finds an appropriate correspondency and complement in the *supra*-human ideal of a spiritual society,—of a Church.

With the end of this seventh Lecture the whole course might close. We shall then have traversed its lines of reasoning already laid down. We shall have reached the goal proposed to us—the coincidence between the results of the Moralist and those of the Natural Theist. What we conclude from the absolute truths of Morality, and notably from the doctrine of Retribution, will have been shown to harmonize with those relations between God and Man which ensue upon the conclusions of Natural Theology. Retributive Justice underlies this meeting-point; it underlies our certitude of a future life, and the glorious superstructure of Natural Religion.

In order, however, that no kind of reasonable verification be neglected, I shall endeavour to make of my last Lecture something more than a summary and synthesis of the elements of thought already preceding it.

My purpose is (as I have said) to avoid technical language, and employ plain and popular forms of speech. To maintain this rule, I must omit certain kinds of argument: metaphysical reasoning, for example, and such psychological questions as belong to the rise and progress of our common Humanity. My positions will, therefore, rest throughout upon the *facts* of our moral nature—the existing constitution of our Conscience, Will, and Being, as men. I shall not attempt to traverse the debateable ground of

what is called Anthropogeny, nor discuss supposable conditions prevenient to what we now are: the embryo states and cradle of life of mankind.

Fact-argument is, of course, the kind of argument most welcome to the generality of auditors, because most used in common-sense affairs. But concerning all facts of human Life, Thought, and Will, there is one difficulty which may at any time be raised. It may always be said, these are facts only because men are not reasonable. Men accept as truth what they wish to believe in consequence of custom, prejudice, or predilection. Were this a just account of the matter, the old fable might be quoted against all human knowledge. Our world of thought would rest upon an elephant; its elephant stand on a tortoise; its tortoise hang in air! But the lesson would tell equally against *all* knowing, thinking, speech; against irreligious creeds as well as religious; against doubt, denial, disbelief. To a practised reasoner, this and all other such difficulties appear a cloud-army. He is well aware that the πού στῶ, the fulcrum for the lever, the first-grounds of Reason, must exist somewhere, or else Being itself must melt away into illusive Nihilism. But

> "Hæ nugæ seria ducent
> In mala derisum."

This eighth Lecture, therefore, will attempt to show that such assents as are demanded by the doctrine of Retribution are *not* extensions of belief got by any process—supra, infra, or extra Naturam

Humanam; but truths given us by that truth-power of Reason to which the apostles appeal, to which all evidences of Religion appeal, and on which all Man's scientific knowledge necessarily reposes.

Sciences themselves have their gradations. The science of metaphysics is defined to be the science of First-grounds—the account of why we accept any knowledge or any truth at all. When I say why we accept, I mean why we are *constrained* to such acceptance by the very law of our Humanity. I shall venture, then, just so far over the metaphysical border-line, as to prove (I hope successfully) that to reject or call in question the first-grounds of Morality and Retributive Justice is to deny, not only our knowledge, but our power of knowing—to deny, not only practical life and reality, but, along with all the rest, our *Reason*. For nothing can be plainer than that if Reason's sovereign gift to us is a circlet of truth, we are not at liberty to break it up and deal as we please with its fragments. We have no right to say, "Let this be treasured as a pearl of price, —let that be cast before swine." Such unfounded usurpations might befit the tyrants of Reason; but I ask you to be Reason's disciples,—to be sincere and heart-whole in your discipleship,—above all, to be consistent.

Thus arguing, I shall, as on other occasions, support and verify abstract thought by the results of common-sense, and by our experience of life in the concrete. On such topics I hope to cite sufficient authority.

My last Lecture must close with what quaint old Fuller might call a "Pisgah Sight" of Natural Religion.

A few words as to "Method" may be expected from me. I shall say them, and then have done with this view of my intended argument. We are about to deal with first-truths. Let us recall some valuable doctrine which the ancestor of Oxford logic taught in his Athenian School respecting them. They cannot be proved deductively, because, being first, there is nothing *prior* from which to syllogize. But we can prove them in the most palpably stringent manner, by demonstrating the absurdity and impossibility of denying them. Furthermore, their harmony with *other* known truths is no mean verification. On these doctrines Aristotle founds his method.

Our method will be a following of Aristotle; and the Aristotelian method is the widest possible. Its first-truths are given us in Consciousness: Aristotle's Practical Reason—the *Lumen Siccum* of Bacon—the Pure Practical Reason of Kant. We begin, therefore, by interrogating Consciousness. Next, we are unable to deny them without affirming that which is absurd or impossible. Finally, they are accordant with other knowledge. And the more widely these symphonies are echoed in the different spheres of human life—science, æsthetic art, philosophy, emotion, sentiment, aspiration—the better for our argument; because we are listening to a concord of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good.

Our method involves, of course, an appeal to the

history of human civilization, and some criticism of what is written there respecting the subjects discussed. A recalcitrant disciple of Mr. Mill tells us that it was Mill's partial adoption of this procedure which caused the antagonism between him and those who have renounced his ultimate teaching. You may, therefore, like to recollect the method preferred by them on our subject. It is extremely narrow, and may with fairness be described as a dogmatic vilipending of Human Nature. Their contempt for Humanity is shown by their dwelling on its lowest traits, and abscíding its nobilities as illusions. The circle of Man's hope, belief, and knowledge thus becomes,

"Small by degrees, and beautifully less;"

till truth is reduced to a vanishing point.

My own view of Human Nature includes those abscided nobilities. Yet it can never be correctly accused of Optimism. I argue, not only from the good which Man endeavours, but from the evil he has done. The darker aspect is the foil of the brighter; and both aspects show the moral vitality of Man. They do so, because the inexorable social law deduced from Man's history has not called good, evil; nor evil, good. If you hesitate to admit this statement, reflect that it is proved true by the patent fact of Progress. For progress cannot be evolved apart from some insight into evil, desire to root it out, and endeavour to plant and nurture some goodness in its stead. Should this wide generalization appear too wide, consider that self-education—

the task and duty of us all—is in miniature exactly the same thing as social progress on a larger and grander scale. Consider, likewise, how much moral insight Remorse pre-supposes, and remember that in one sense we all *make* Death. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is a law known or knowable by ourselves.

For all these reasons, I ask you to agree with me that the widest feasible method is the safer, as the more philosophic. It seems evidently safer, because if a certain kind of truth can be shown to possess the assenting sympathies of Humanity,—if it appears to be the indigenous growth and blossom of our nature,—it may claim a *primâ-facie* probability in its favour. "There is," says Mill, "a certain presumption of the truth of any opinion held by many human minds, requiring to be rebutted by assigning some other real or possible cause for its prevalence."* Such a method is also more philosophic. For Philosophy aspires to represent the widest and deepest thought of Mankind. Let this thought be adequately represented, and the doctrine of Retribution—nay, the whole cycle of Natural Religion—has gained its first ground. Yet not its whole ground, unless Philosophy be encyclopædic. Reasoned-out Thought is far from being the whole of Man; although this conception would certainly be nearer truth than systems which conceive him as a register of observations. Now, Natural Religion is, as we have intimated, the going forth of our *entire* human being towards a trans-

* *Three Essays*, p. 128.

cendent human Futurity, and towards an Author and End of our existence Whom we legitimately apprehend as transcending both our own nature and the natural world by which we are in this present life environed. Its evidences must, therefore, resemble in variety the evidences of Natural Theology. Respecting them, Mill writes: "The evidences of a Creator are not only of several distinct kinds, but of such diverse characters that they are adapted to minds of very different descriptions; and it is hardly possible for any mind to be equally impressed by them all."* A conclusive reason, surely, for the method which I have proposed.

The subject itself on which we are entering has attractions for more than one character of mind.

It may reasonably attract the man who, after deliberation, has chosen for the guide of his life, Christianity. A harder and less common choice than most persons seem to imagine. Now, Natural Religion has an immediate relativity with the wider evidences of Christian Revelation. These are classed as internal, and external. Suppose the truth of Natural Religion once accepted, we have already gained an insight into the previous question underlying *all* evidence for Revelation. We see, in the first place, why, and in what respects, Revelation is desirable. Moreover, we can appreciate its *interior* fitness for the needs and shortcomings of our nature. This kind of appreciation forms an internal evidence of considerable value. Taking, then, the aspirations of

* *Three Essays*, p. 138.

the human soul, its unsatisfied longings and noblest tendencies, distinct but undeveloped, we acquire some estimate of the goodness and greatness of Christian precepts, sentiments, and principles. Such an estimate yields an internal evidence more valuable still, and one which increases in force as we ourselves travel heavenwards. It thus realizes the ancient pilgrim-promise,—"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Again, the main *external* evidence of supernatural words lies in an appeal to supernatural works. Objections against miracles whether grounded on physical laws, or on any other basis whatever, all merge in the doubt acutely suggested by Hume: "Can the probable strength of testimony outweigh the *à priori* improbability of a miracle?" In holding this balance, the scale of testimony has been deprived of some weight by the observation that eye-witness is often mistaken. How much more, then, its repeated echoes! The right answer lies in a scrutiny of the *opposite* scale. Are miracles inherently improbable? Questionless, they are so, if viewed as *isolated* occurrences. Still more improbable, if resolved away as facts often are resolved away. But *how*, when viewed in the concrete? If Natural Religion be true and right, they are natural expectations. So far from being improbabilities, *if* they were absent Christianity would be called to account for their absence. Mohammedanism was so called to account; and the argument has been thought unanswerable.

To a reasoner not as yet persuaded to be a Christian, Natural Religion must appear of the very

highest importance. If demonstrated, Reason and Hope have now ceased to be at variance. The supposed antithesis has disappeared. Our human soul, if not naturally a Christian (as Tertullian thought it), is by no means atheistic, nor yet sceptical. Least of all can it ever be indifferent. At an interval, possibly, but still at no hopeless interval, it places some kind of trust in a living and just God.

To a patriot or philanthropist, what can be more welcome than the belief that Human Nature is no lifeless waste, incapable of religious culture, and, when most civilized, the least visited by that one warm and repaying hope which can lift us above ourselves and help us to "do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God"? Such help is in the hope that this God "will be our Guide even unto death,"—in the trust that, whatever our lot may be now, whatever be our unsatisfied capabilities of knowing, loving, and of true upward-looking aspirations, there exists a better Life more able to satisfy, more adapted to ennoble our natures. It is a life as yet unseen; "but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

LECTURE II.

THE ANSWER OF CONSCIENCE.

LECTURE II.

St. Luke xvi. 25.

"Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

MY text belongs to the only word-picture of the Gospel which portrays a soul in suffering, and also a reverse—another soul *in loco refrigerii*.

The part of this picture most impressive at all times is that central point of illumination where the light of Paradise appears thrown across the shadows of a gloomier scene. The brightness and the darkness are contrasted together, and *both* placed in antithesis with the more passing shades and sunbeams of this life now present. The self-indulgent pleasures of earth are not crowned by felicity in heaven. The sorrow and degradation of an earthly sufferer are not reckoned worthy to be compared with the glory revealed in him.

Whatever other purposes our Lord's picture may have been intended to serve, one of its effects appears reflected in the lives of the early Christians. Nero stood out before their eyes the *vera effigies* of that Antichrist, whose main characteristic it was to shed the blood of martyrs. The latest known type of

Nero's face represents him as a sated voluptuary, wearing the hard, cold, cruel smile which indicates that sensuality has put on its final phase—the pleasure of beholding pain. Ordinary self-indulgence usually implies indifference to the sufferings of others; but the more debasing kinds of animal propensity always pass the bounds of indifference, and make the human beast feel a loathsome delight in human torments. "There are persons," says Mr. Stuart Mill,* "who have a real pleasure in inflicting, or seeing the infliction of pain. This kind of cruelty is not mere hard-heartedness, absence of pity or remorse; it is a positive thing, a particular kind of voluptuous excitement. The East, and Southern Europe, have afforded, and probably still afford, abundant examples of this hateful propensity. I suppose it will be granted that this is not one of the natural inclinations which it would be wrong to suppress. The only question would be whether it is not a duty to suppress the man himself along with it."

Such undoubtedly was Nero, and many another brutal persecutor. Primitive Christians nerved themselves to endure, by deepening the shadows and defining the glories which their Master had placed in contrast: witness the awful scenes drawn by the African enthusiasm of Tertullian, and the exclamations of rapture attributed to tortured and dying men.

As times grew calmer, earnest souls grew calmer too. A worldly life could expect no beatific issue;

* *Essays*, p. 57.

for it is impossible to make the desired gain out of both worlds. A steadfast life, so unselfish as to be void of offence towards God and Man, was acknowledged as a high and noble attainment. It was as if the scenes of a pious and tranquil old age drawn by Plato had been Christianized and made more serenely beautiful. The world now present is depicted as a dissolving view,—that upper world as a city not built with hands, an inheritance that fadeth not away.

In dealing with the subject of Retribution, it cannot be doubted that words exercise a misleading influence upon thought. For if we put aside the stronger—I might say coarser—difficulties, raised by some objectors and to be noticed hereafter, there is a refined and an almost indefinable dread upon minds endowed with strong imaginative powers, lest the pure motives from which they desire to pursue goodness should become sullied by a reference to its personal benefits, remembered at the moment of volition. Such a feeling was expressed in this church by a former vicar, with his usual felicity of language. We get a glimpse into something of the same kind from the attitude assumed by the present President of the British Association towards Natural Religion. Both in him and in Dr. Newman there is also a decided trust in emotional feeling or sentiment, as a foundation for assent to the most sublime kinds of truth. Trains of thought leading the same way appear blended in the posthumous Essays of Mr. Stuart Mill. When three such different thinkers are visited

by an approximately like kind of impression, we may be sure that it is one which deserves consideration. Let us bear it therefore in mind as we proceed.

You will probably have been struck at the beginning of your Ethics by the manner in which Aristotle advances Happiness in his vanguard. He inscribes on its banner the maxim that it deserves to attract us all because a substantial, as well as an ultimate, object of pursuit. This, you know, has given rise to many controversies on the question of Eudæmonism; and they have in turn connected themselves with enquiries into the nature of pleasure and utility, and with discussions how far these latter are either aims or criteria appertaining to human Morality. Any one acquainted with the language of Hume, Paley, and Jeremy Bentham, may feel at once satisfied of the superior purity and refinement of moral character stamped upon the Ethics of twenty-one hundred years ago. We meet with a similar phenomenon in Cicero, who exacts, as obvious duty, rules of commercial honesty and truth which are utterly alien from the age we live in; and which, if enforced from a pulpit, would stamp the preacher as an enthusiast or Utopian visionary. Such plain facts raise a presumption against all theories which make Morality a sort of social development. No one will accuse the Gospel of having introduced into Ethics pleasurable enjoyment, self-indulgence, or self-interest, as principles of Christian activity. Neither can we say that society has regressed since the era of Alexander or the last days of Roman oligarchy. We must

therefore maintain (as indeed seems to be the truth) that those lower motives advocated in our eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are the utterances of a voice never quite silenced in human creatures: the natural language of that side of our being on which we approach animality. Thus viewed, the older and more noble maxims which we have cited are not expressions indigenous to pleasure-loving Greece or to brutally luxurious Rome. They are the reactions of higher natures against the degraded tones of their times. *O si sint omnia!* Would that it were always so with both Pagan and Christian Philosophies!

Leaving Hedonism in shadow for the present, we may remark that Aristotle was fully aware how even the most ordinary human comfort, much more happiness, is, in this disjointed world, very often incompatible with virtue. The conditions of life he lays down for the happy man are, he knows, very seldom realized. Next, what is to be done when the question lies between right and suffering? In moderate temptations, such as are common to man, the answer is clear to his mind. But it may come to the *αἴσχιστα* and *δεινότατα*—the most shameful of intolerable torments. Here the greatest of systematic pre-Christian moralists hesitates, where a Christian father would have made a deliberate stand. Yet one admires Aristotle's hesitation. There is no attempt to cover up his shrinking from torture; no excuse to blind his reader. His is sheer sympathy,—fellow-feeling with human nerve and brain. The philosopher does what it is unusual to do: he puts himself by the side of a mutilated

fellow-creature, and asks, What should *I* say or do? The exact question which three-fourths of us never ask! If you will steady your thoughts in face of this question of questions, it will become a vast inlet of knowledge! There is strong mental *κάθαρσις*,—a very real purification of the Soul gained by contemplating terrible dilemmas of Right and Wrong, Greek tragic issues, Scandinavian myth-enigmas, and other such dark things which underlie this life of ours, yet are seldom apparent on the surface of its much-concealing stream.

Few prose writers of our own age have ever brought to light so many of these half-hidden (almost always neglected) horrors, as that author of realistic fictions who was buried in Westminster Abbey nearly five years ago. By way of prelude to one of them, he wrote a brief account of his travels on the Continent, and entitled it "Pictures from Italy." I will read one or two passages from his sketch of what he saw in the Pope's Palace at Avignon. They will recall to most persons here a dreadful and revolting description, which is unfit for recital in this place. As you listen to my short extracts, let me ask you to reckon, if you can, the amount of untold, unremembered misery implied in Charles Dickens's narrative. Misery not lightened by one touch of sympathy then; misery so unimaginable that tears are never shed over it now. Misery enacted by men who are to us like phantoms passed away—the torturers and the tortured—yet all recorded, and their names written somewhere.

"A few steps brought us to the dungeons, in which the prisoners of the Inquisition were confined for forty-eight hours after their capture, without food or drink, that their constancy might be shaken, even before they were confronted with their gloomy judges. The day has not got in there yet. They are still small cells, shut in by four unyielding, close, hard walls; still profoundly dark; still massively doored and fastened, as of old. . . . On, into a vaulted chamber, now used as a store-room: once the Chapel of the Holy Office. The place where the tribunal sat was plain. The platform might have been removed but yesterday. Conceive the parable of the Good Samaritan having been painted on the wall of one of these Inquisition chambers! But it was, and may be traced there yet.

"High up in the jealous wall are niches where the faltering replies of the accused were heard and noted down. Many of them had been brought out of the very cell we had just looked into. We had trodden in their very footsteps. . . . Then, into a room adjoining—a rugged room, with a funnel-shaped, contracting roof, open at the top to the bright day. . . . The Chamber of Torture! And the roof was made of that shape to stifle the victim's cries!* . . . There the furnace was: there they made the irons red-hot. Those holes supported the sharp stake, on which the tortured persons hung poised,—dangling with their whole weight from the roof. . . . A cold air, laden with an earthy smell, falls upon the face. It comes from a trap-door in the wall. One looks in. Downward to the bottom, upward to the

* It might seem uncandid were I to omit from these pages Mr. Dickens's strong antithesis between the Inquisition and Christ-like Christianity:—

"See the stone trough . . . for the water torture! Gurgle, swell, bloat, burst, for the Redeemer's honour! Suck the bloody rag, deep down into your unbelieving body, heretic, at every breath you draw! And when the executioner plucks it out, reeking with the smaller mysteries of God's own Image, know us for His chosen servants, true believers in the Sermon on the Mount, elect disciples of Him who never did a miracle but to heal; who never struck a man with palsy, blindness, deafness, dumbness, madness, any one affliction of mankind; and never stretched His blessed hand out but to give relief and ease!"

Compare the speeches of the various high personages in "Queen Mary" (published since I wrote), particularly the protest assigned to Cardinal Pole.

top, of a steep, dark, lofty tower; very dismal, very dark, very cold. The executioner of the Inquisition flung those who were past all further torturing down here.

"Again into the Chapel of the Holy Office. . . . A little trap-door in the floor. . . . Behold the oubliettes of the Inquisition! Subterranean, frightful, black, terrible, deadly! . . . My blood ran cold as I looked down into the vaults where these forgotten creatures, with recollections of the world outside—of wives, friends, children, brothers—starved to death, and made the stones ring with their unavailing groans. But the thrill I felt on seeing the accursed wall below decayed and broken through, and the sun shining in through its gaping wounds, was like a sense of victory and triumph."

Place yourself, in imagination, each or any of you, beneath the vault of yonder rugged room. Picture the scene at least two or three times, and each time put to your own heart a problem. Begin by laying aside the thought of friends from whom, when once a prisoner, you are severed. Not a soul of them will ever see you again. No one can even conjecture where you are. You have been trapped, it may be, in a lonely street, and brought hither under cover of night. Fix your attention entirely upon yourself. In another ten minutes you must undergo the Question: what answer will you give? Will you confess to these men, according to the example of St. Paul, 'After the way which they call heresy, so worship I, the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets"? Or will you deny your own convictions, and return to a creed you have quitted in obedience to Scripture and the Church primitive—that Church which was most pure and incorrupt? To do this would be to obtain, at the very least, easy death; probably no more than

a short penance; possibly, seclusion in a well-known monastery. To denounce your friends, and enter the service of your tormentors as a spy, would be to gain life and much that makes life luxurious, if not splendid. Of these last basenesses you pronounce yourself incapable; but as to the former, think quickly, for you have not much time to think. What profit shall there be in your blood when you go down into the pit? You shall go down in silence. No protest of yours—no word, nor deed, will ever be known: neither the fact of your death, if you die; nor yet your existence, should you continue to live in any other vocation than the abhorred one of being a spy upon your friends. Such is the policy of this tribunal.

In this situation, if Right and Wrong be thought to depend on utility or non-utility, Right and Wrong are *at an end.* Pleasure is a different affair. Some kinds of pleasures are always accessible to living animals. Remember what Archdeacon Paley says about *pleasure.*

"The greatest quantity of it ordinarily attainable in human life is what we mean by happiness, when we enquire or pronounce what human happiness consists in.

"In which enquiry I will omit much usual declamation on the dignity and capacity of our nature; the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to the animal part of our constitution; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy of some satisfactions, or the meanness, grossness, and sensuality of others; because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing but in continuance and intensity." *

So far the Archdeacon.

* *Moral and Political Philosophy,* Book I. ch. vi.

Such a life as yours will not last long; you may therefore omit what that eighteenth-century divine writes respecting the limits of time and repetition. The notion of your being wearied out by the happiness of pleasure is, in all likelihood, an absurdity.

Quick, then,—for you deliberate as Damocles feasted.

This life present has some charms left, but not any connected with usefulness towards your fellow-creatures; nor yet with any importance your martyrdom might possess in their eyes.

The debate is personal,—a question for reasonable self-love: a very different thing from that iron question before you.

The whole matter can be stated in ten words, —Will you live, compelled to make your life a lie?

Is it imaginable that any human creature, clothed in shrinking flesh and blood, would, in so horrible a moment, fail to ask himself or herself, Am I sure there exists an Immortality,—a just requital in a life after death? Am I quite certain that I shall really live again, beneath the rule of a righteous God?

If this self-interrogation is inevitable, does it not appear that we have found a case in which the idea of Retribution will form a very essential belief, and the thought of our exceeding great reward no improper consolation to a struggling half-dead man or woman? Half-dead with horror,—not on your

own account alone, O foreboding soul,—but because near you crouches *another* being, *more* dear than the ruddy drops that visit your sad heart. To this other, your answer is all significant: one fate enfolds you both in its grim embrace. No matter who this other may be,—your daughter, my father; your sister, my young friend; or it may be your affianced bride;—whatever that crouching Form may be to you,—daughter, sister, bride, brother, father, husband of your heart,—it enshrines the jewel you love best, the spirit that responds to yours. And life or death,—ease or the bed of pain and the dark dank oubliette,—the piecemeal dying and decaying;—such is the alternative waiting for the words of your mouth.

We need not pursue a theme so agonizing. It is one with respect to which Facts that make us blush for our species have unhappily overpassed the farthest range of Fancy. Its interest to us now turns upon a single point. And we may determine it. There are not twenty persons in this church who would refuse to die.

You would die, because it must needs be more terrible to live,—to live and despise yourself, hate yourself, condemn yourself, every day of your life. And when Death comes at last, you must needs feel and know it most terrible of all *so* to depart.

You would die, because to live must be the existence of a brute animal, and not of a Man. You would die, because the Choice rests with yourself. You can neither evade it, nor throw it upon fate, frenzy,

ignorance, impulse. It is a choice which calls out your central Being. You are face to face with an issue *infinite;* and the lot, once chosen, is immutable. Immutable for yourself, and for the one you love better than self,—nay, than all the whole world besides.

It is obvious how, in the choice of strangling rather than life, the chooser naturally bends his eye upon the belief in Retribution, *whole and entire.* How natural it is to think of the tyrant inquisitor, claiming to wield infallibly-directed thunderbolts, as of one who shall himself be stricken:—

> "I say to thee, false Priest,
> A ministering angel shall my dear one be,
> When thou liest howling."

Or, if the sufferer loses the thought of his hateful tormentor in love and sorrow for the partner of his torment, then does not that doctrine which affirms "the recompence of the reward" seem the true *non dolet,*—the sole anodyne for the beloved of his soul? To think of that dear one's pain as swallowed up in immediate blessedness unspeakable,—to hope that its vision and realization may sustain the failing heart of flesh, and dull the anguish of those slow-moving hours,—shall we not all say, *this* is human;—true for us, and true for all beings endowed with like affections throughout the universe? And should we not say the same of a second thought certain to come in,—the thought of sharing that same Infinity of bliss?

Such, then, is the most striking aspect of the picture we have been contemplating. Let me now call your attention to one special circumstance connected with it. Those thinkers who fear for their purity of moral aims, the slightest shadow of self-consoling hope, entertain no such misgiving when they behold the tears of the oppressed,—of them that have no comforter;—while on the side of their oppressors is power,—but *they* have no comforter.* Here the Fountain of Hope seems to spring up in its proper place: it is, according to the oriental metaphor, like an eye in a desert land, looking from earth to Heaven. Could we really believe, that sorrow immorally—or even *un*-morally inflicted—has *no* appeal; that injured righteousness is hopeless as the silent grave;—could we divest ourselves of each thought and sentiment which tells us the exact opposite,—then the world would indeed appear, through one or more of its fairest portions, nothing better than a vast lazar-house! We should praise "the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive." We should say, "Better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun."† But in the very moment of our so speaking, we should feel that our speech was at once to God and to Man untrue. We should recoil from our own disbelief in horror, and maintain with all our might, that "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked."‡ "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every

* Ecclesiastes iv. 1. † *Ib.* iv. 2, 3. ‡ *Ib.* iii. 17.

secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." *

Having adverted to these truths, we leave them for the present; simply affirming that they are truths for us,—true in the fact of their being the essential glasses and optical arrangements, through which our Moral Eye looks; just as there are other optical arrangements and glasses, never alienated, nor alienable by our human Understanding. And if these affirmations are true for us, then are they true also for all beings in a like manner morally constituted. Let me now rather call your attention away from the *end* in view, (that of Retribution,)—and direct it to those *Ethical Distinctions*, on the reality of which our present knowledge of the *ultima ratio* is surely and certainly founded.

Turn back your eyes to the scene we drew. This (as you will perceive at a glance) affords an instance where the inner and nobler element of our Being uses its *outer envelope* as a base mechanical slave,—commands it to suffer, to languish, and expire,—and accounts such absolute sovereignty no unrighteous usurpation. Is it possible, then, that our Soul can be but the *rhythm* of an organized body?—our Morality a well-tuned music made by nerve and brain? Were this supposable, it must naturally follow that when the face blanches, and every nerve thrills with anguish, —when sight and sense almost refuse their functions, —when the brain itself sickens and whirls under the torture, and from sympathy with another's torments,

* Ecclesiastes xii. 14.

—*then*, surely, kinship and birth would assert their ties, the body would *modulate its rhythm*, and the soul yield to the terrible dilemma. Then, surely, the moral law would become *inverted*,—ἵλεώς σοι ("be it far from thee") would become its sentence,—and the torn flesh gain a respite from its rack.

The same yielding of Soul to body must necessarily ensue with *equal* certainty in all or any of the following cases, which have been maintained by sophisticated logic,—provided, that is, all or any of them *could* be held true. If, in the first place, Right and Wrong were mere modifications of pleasure and pain. If, again, our sense of Duty were simply a transformed sense of earthly Interest. If, furthermore, we could *know* nothing of a Good higher than gross Corporeal good. Finally, if Truth and Morality had no elevation, no superiority, when compared with sensual enjoyment, or with circumstances easy and useful to the sons of clay. Were *any* of these propositions true, the Soul could never command the body to suffer. Each sufferer's counsel to his best beloved would repeat the "Be it far from thee" which Christ pronounced the voice of Satan, heard in the person of Simon Peter. But let these propositions be esteemed false;—and, contrariwise, we hear Duty speaking a peculiar language,—far—*very* far different from the accents of physical pleasure or pain, of expediency and utility, of all else that measures the Immortal Conscience by a mortal standard—or of all that doubts or denies its Immortality. And this language of Duty is a Tongue spoken by *Men*,—it may be by

other reasoning creatures. Perchance, it is one amongst the many tongues of Angels.

Yet the *savans* of the last century boldly asserted that Morality was nothing better than well-dressed usefulness. Many of our young thinkers now are apt to speak of Bentham or Mill as the chiefs of Utilitarianism;—forgetting its lineal descent from the speculations of David Hume.

"This circumstance," he says, "of usefulness has, in general, the strongest energy, and most entire command over our sentiments. It must, therefore, be the source of a considerable part of the merit ascribed to humanity, benevolence, friendship, public spirit, and other social virtues of that stamp; as it is the SOLE source of the moral approbation paid to fidelity, justice, veracity, integrity, and those other estimable and useful qualities and principles." *

Sentences, these, as wide and incisive as anything that Bentham ever wrote. They are, also, in harmony with the general tenor of Hume's other moral maxims;—strung, as it were, upon the thread that runs through all his Sociology. We may grant that more recent rhetoric is often more vigorous. As, for example, when Bentham writes, or is supposed to, have written,—

"The talisman of arrogance, indolence, and ignorance, is to be found in a single word, an authoritative imposture, which in these pages it will be frequently necessary to unveil. It is the word 'ought,' 'ought or ought not,' as circumstances may be. In deciding you ought to do this, you ought not to do it, is not every question of morals set at rest? If," he continues, "the use of the word be admissible at all, it 'ought' to be banished from the vocabulary of morals." †

* *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Section III. Part 2.

† *Deontology*, I. p. 32. Though published professedly from Bentham's manuscript, some doubts have been thrown on his authorship a point of no consequence to my use of the passage.

Strange, that the author of this edict of exile should never have reflected that to require for Utility's sake the ostracism of "Ought" from our vocabulary, is to confess that this same "Ought"—this verb of Duty—is, after all, a distinctly *Human* utterance,—an utterance which lives and breathes through the noblest languages of Man. It gathers into itself the idea of an inward constraint which alone is perfect freedom; of a noble mark at which the Spirit aims; of a soul-culture which is the most Beautiful as well as the Best. For, as Undine truly says, every creature aspires after that which is higher than its firstborn self. The Law of the Sublime is written on the nature of the lowly;—and Man, who is the highest of all, is also the real Voice of the world. He inherits and explains it, as its Tenant, its Interpreter, and its Spokesman. And in this respect the "Ought to do" sounds to human ears as something more than a rule for our Moral governance;—it is in itself a *prophecy* of better things yet to be revealed in us.

That the utterance of Duty is really prophetic, as well as supreme, may appear a verified fact, if we revert in thought to those ages when Moral Truth was most lavishly tested by imprisonment, torture, and death. Why did the Babylonian Captives defy the tyranny of the great King,—or the Maccabee victims resist the will of Antiochus? Why did Christian Martyrs undergo all that the barbarism of Rome's *carnifices* could invent? Why labour, as bondslaves maimed and miserable, in underground caverns for ever banished from the common sun, the goodly earth

and air? The reason in each case put on the religious garb of its own age and period; but in no case, probably, was there insight as to the present mundane issue. There was, doubtless, many a hopeful thought directed to the supra-mundane sphere. There was a belief, too, that he who fought against God,—Epiphanes, Nero, Antichrist,—fought for his own destruction. But to us the result has become wide, deep, firm, beyond all possibility of anticipation. The blood of the Martyrs has been the seed of the Church; and many a fair harvest-field has grown golden through its vitalizing force. That blood has also germinated into the choicest plants of *our* Church's vineyard,—religious freedom,—the freedom of Conscience, Reason, Will. I say Will,—for Will was tried against iron,—and came off victorious from that grim conflict. The primitive martyr who bore pain died in hope; yet unconscious of the benefit which would follow to mankind,—a benefit which our own Anglo-Saxon race seems likely to make world-wide. And the same is true of the period when our English priests and bishops triumphed over Marian degradation, fetters, and flame. The proverb, happily vulgar in England, that "Honesty is the best Policy," represents in homely phrase a maxim made absolute by the Moral Law: that right doing must finally prevail—and prevail for final good. Yet, *how* this prophetic maxim should receive an earthly accomplishment,—Duty never waited nor asked to know. Duty accepted with certitude of faith the affirmed eternal "*Shall be.*"

To see the absoluteness of this truth, we must examine its elements one by one. Most of them are involved in the example chosen as the main subject of this Lecture—*suffering for Conscience' sake.* But to be appreciated, they require separate illustration.

Observe, *first*, as flowing naturally from my latter remarks, one salient point which may be called *the Paradox* of moral performance. The very thing which seems to coarse perceptions unlikely to be obtained by Self-Denial, is the *goal reached*,—the prize enjoyed as its inevitable consequent. Take, for example, the case of an ascetic philanthropist:—

"If," says Professor Grote of Cambridge—"If a man's life is to be spent in the service of his fellow-creatures, in promoting a material happiness for them, he must not have the idea that a material happiness is what he wants for himself; he must find his own happiness in the success of his labours, and in the sight of their happiness; where indeed he will find it most abundantly, and in a form far more real and intense than any material happiness could be: so that philanthropy is the best self-love, always under the all-important consideration, (which renders vain a good deal which philosophers have said upon this subject,) that it is not from such policy, and with a view to the happiness of self, that it is practised."*

The truth here is plain. Were Philanthropy contaminated with Self-love, it would cease to be Philanthropy. It would become that *trade-benevolence*, which has disgraced many a public character in England and America: a sort of benevolence which in this country, happily for our morals, has been from time to time requited by exposure and criminal degradation.

Philanthropy is the opposite of Self-love,—they are

* Grote's *Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy*, p. 104, note.

mutual exclusives; the very thought of the one consumes, like a flame of fire, all thought of the other. And yet, paradoxical as it may seem, the Mint of Nature and of God has stamped Happiness—pure and elevated happiness—on the obverse of every medal inscribed with the legend of self-control and self-devotion. It is the same paradox as the great heathen's assertion, that although perfect happiness is attendant on perfected Virtue, yet the votary of pleasure or self-gratification will inevitably ruin both.

How often has this pulpit echoed with lessons of Asceticism, more or less refined! And how many men of high aims and pure conscience are better and happier for those lessons! When one thinks of such realities, one feels proud of one's own University, and glad to be a missionary to its nobler youth.

The paradox of Philanthropy is likewise the paradox of Martyrdom. The grand difference is that the medallic obverse—the Martyr's crown—pre-supposes a Heaven, where bright things will shine their brightest.

Our *next* step may appear easy in comparison with the first. It may seem a like, but less, paradox to say, that Usefulness is best secured by a purely ethical disregard—nay, contempt—of Utility. This consequence turns, no doubt, on the tone and temper of mind produced; and an observation of these effects cannot but be instructive. Theoretically, the assertion of Right and Wrong, in opposition to Expediency, is supposed to harden a character. Independent Morality has been associated with sternness; while

general considerations of utility, and an eye to consequences, are said to soften men's dispositions, and make them tolerant. But facts do not bear out either conclusion. In the School of Bentham, benevolent Utilitarianism flowered,—and the elder Mill is ever eulogized as its pride. Mr. Grote, the historian, had opportunities for observation, was a friend of "the Benthamians," as he terms them, and was not the man to set down aught in malice. Yet his censure points to cynicism, asperity, and something like detraction.* If, then, such is the influence of a noble regard to Utility, what will be the effect of an ignoble and contracted Self-interest?

In truth, the self-regarding question, "Who will show us any good?" is an up-growth no more indigenous to Moral Reason than it is to the soil of Faith. The answer in all ages is the same: The light of supreme Truth is also the light of the supreme Good. But, as the sun darkens all earthly fires, so does

* Mr. Grote's impression may be distinctly gathered from a letter printed by Mrs. Grote in her Life of the historian:—"G. Grote to G. W. Norman, May 1819. London. . . . I have breakfasted and dined several times with Ricardo, who has been uncommonly civil and kind to me. I have met Mill often at his house, and hope to derive great pleasure and instruction from his acquaintance, as he is a very profound thinking man, and seems well disposed to communicate, as well as clear and intelligible in his manner. His mind has, indeed, all that cynicism and asperity which belong to the Benthamian school, and what I chiefly dislike in him is the readiness and seeming preference with which he dwells on the faults and defects of others—even of the greatest men! But it is so very rarely that a man of any depth comes across my path, that I shall most assuredly cultivate his acquaintance a good deal farther."

Eternal Truth, (which is one side of the manifoldness of Good supreme,) obscure and utterly eclipse the dust-born maxims of selfish calculation. It may appear, in an argumentative way, to thee and me, O logical controversialist, that we should each of us, above all things, secure our own selves. But suppose the thought of a so-seeming Expediency poisons the fount of virtue and uncontaminated happiness? Suppose the self-interested pursuit ruins our best and highest Self? Shall we not thereby live to frustrate our own logical conclusion,—to stultify our rule of choice,—

"Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas?"

Had the faithful, in the Papal Inquisition at Avignon, chosen to live, would life have been worth the having?

This instance may remind us to enquire how Expediency prospers? Did the Massacre of St. Bartholomew prove a final Utility to France and Rome? Has Spain been tranquillized by her ages of Inquisitorial decimation? When the Romans crucified six thousand slaves at once, because it was politic so to do, was such policy a symptom of vitality or of decay? Did the Jewish state grow vigorous by her ruler's base Utilitarian maxim, "It is *expedient* for us that one man should die for the people"?* Was this Expediency the language of Moral Right? With as much falsehood, and as little truth, we might say that *vox populi* was *vox Dei*, when the people cried out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

There is, indeed, a very similar lesson taught us by

* S. John xi. 50.

the High Priest and his citizens. The infallibility of the People, and the certitude of the supreme law of human advantage, are both negatived. Yet both are *kindred* doctrines. Here is a case in point :—

"The community," wrote Mr. James Mill, in a passage justly castigated by Lord Maçaulay—"the community cannot have an interest opposite to its interests. To affirm this would be a contradiction in terms. . . . One community may intend the evil of another; never its own." *

Like other *verbal* contradictions, this one does not hold when applied to realities. Communities, like the individuals composing them, act every day from interested motives in a manner most effectively opposed to their own interests.

Nothing is more ordinary than to hear a man complain that his life has been a failure,—for which he has only to blame himself and his advisers. Nothing is more historical than to find a community taking vengeance on some political scapegoat—some Professor of Statecraft, who never could have persuaded his fellow-countrymen, had they not been self-persuaded into hearing him, and adopting his *un*-moral expedients.

* For both passage censured and strictures referred to, see the *Review* of Mill's "Essay on Government" in the *Miscellaneous Writings of Lord Macaulay*, about two leaves from its commencement. Early in this paper, the critic remarks on the singular tendency of Utilitarians to do as we shall find M. Comte guilty of doing, —*i.e.*, to substitute assumed or *à priori* principles for the slower and more careful process of Induction. The same tendency leads such reasoners to neglect verification by experience. Compare Macaulay's strictures—pre-eminent as specimens of his peculiar debating power—with Huxley on Positivism (*Lay Sermons*, p. 162), J. S. Mill on Comte (pp. 83-5); and with pp. 91-2 *post*, and footnote appended.

Let us take by way of illustration a case often discussed by leaders of the People, and almost always wrongly determined.

That the good citizen should yield his own manifest *private* advantage, for the sake of a fairly probable public good, is an evident dictate of the Moral Law. Any real lover of his species would be the first to confess and act upon it. But does the Moral Law *equally* countenance any body-politic which makes a practice of over-riding the rightful interests of its individual citizens? View the sacrifice from both opposed sides, as a spontaneous act benevolently done, or as a forced "benevolence"—an exercise of *summum jus*. It is plain that many communities would pronounce one and the same thing to be in *both* cases expedient. Yet, in the long run, the *adverse* moral rule of respect for individual rights will certainly be found to coincide with social well-being—understood in its widest acceptation. We may here reflect with sorrow how few States, large or small, have at any time learned the lesson, *Fiat Justitia, Cœlum ruat.* We may also draw an obvious inference that the Moral Law never does command the thing which is *in*expedient, nor yet does it command the expedient thing *because* it is expedient. It commands the act, because, being expedient, it is also right, just, and equitable *in foro conscientiæ*. A further plain inference is that the very fact of this double consideration of the Expedient and the Moral establishes an intrinsic *distinction* between our two human faculties consulted—our sense of what is

useful and our sense of what is right. They may agree, or they may not. If they do agree, so much the easier our course. If they disagree irreconcileably, in reality and not in phrase only, the supremacy of Right ought to be admitted. And (as we have seen) there is reason to believe that its admission must be honest and honourable in the first place; in the second, it will be found at last a worldly-wise course of action.

Yet the fact appears undeniable, that *some* contest between the apparently Expedient and the apparently Right, is an occurrence which must always be expected in a world like ours. Examples are written in every book of Thucydides. Examples are written in the book of every human life. It has, therefore, become a question urgent upon the moralist,—Can we discover a plain rule by which such questions shall be determined, without a show of Utopianism on the one side; on the other, without any reproach of unworthy compliance with base motives and impulses more germane to the brute than to the human creature?

Several answers have been suggested, as solutions of this practical difficulty. *One* rests its efficacy upon the culture of our Moral sense—a hope shared in common by philanthropists and legislators at almost all periods of history. Let a man cultivate his Conscience as the garden of his Soul,—as the vineyard of his Lord. Few of us are ignorant what acuteness of insight becomes the peculiar property of a woman true to her heart and her sex; we feel

how much we may learn, and have learned, from the mind and music of that delicate Moral beauty. Such are often the companion Spirits * given us, as part of our human education; and he who has always lacked that influence of Woman, lacks (as Dr. Johnson said of melody) one sense additional to the ordinary five. This fact, which will be affirmed by most men of the world, as it was by Lord Lytton in almost every book he wrote,—this single fact is sufficient to prove the existence of some cultivable Ethical insight. It is to this selfsame insight, this faculty divine, that the Scripture appeals when it says, "Love thy neighbour, and the stranger, as thyself." † "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." ‡

These words of Moses and of Christ have (as is well known) elicited the admiration of men who differed so widely in their religious tenets, as to agree in little besides this most penetrating ethical aphorism. Now, the human endowment implicitly referred to,—the power which renders so noble a maxim intelligible and appropriate to us,—*that* power which renders us capable of regarding ourselves as other than ourselves, and of looking at the things of others as if they were our own,—is a power separating between Man and Brute, and involving the history of our

* "A Spirit, yet a Woman too!" (Wordsworth). Compare Dante, *Purgatorio*, xxx., xxxi.

† Leviticus xix. 18 and 34; Matt. v. 19.

‡ Matt. vii. 12, xxii. 39, and Luke vi. 31. These double parallels make up one precept: the former texts containing the *principle* of the commandment; the latter its *practical* application.

most clearly distinctive Intuitions. It shows us what our Moralities ought to be; it also shows us the central secret of our own Volitions. To see ourselves as *other* than ourselves, in an *ab-extrâ* light, enables us to say with Horace, "This was unlovely." To see others even *as* it were ourselves enables us to spend and be spent in the common service. Thus doubly seeing, we live a twofold life,—not for self only, but for Humanity, and therefore in the purest, truest sense, for God.

As plain and practical Canons of Duty, no one will question the supreme excellence of the precepts such as those already quoted. If it be desired to link them with Ethical Science,—and if the question arises, Where is their evidence and ground of determination?—our answer need not be far to seek. Such words as these, successfully addressed to Human Nature, and obtaining from it both echo and assent, lead to no doubtful presupposal of *two* very important conditions. The first, that they must meet with a sufficient affirmation from our Nature itself; otherwise they would remain inoperative. The second, that in order to bear the noble fruit they have borne, they must not only fall upon ground the reverse of barren, but they must needs carry within *themselves* some germ of vitality, some *truth-producing* Truth. And the more difficult obedience to such lofty precepts may appear in any man's eyes, the more absolutely certain must also appear the existence of these two essential conditions. Hence, likewise, the greatest encourage-

ment for us to investigate in the direction to which they point. For, be it remembered, what we want to discover is a living type which embodies an intelligible First-Truth; not a mere abstract statement of generalized facts, but a formative principle, a *genetic* law of Duty capable of a verification in like manner with other laws of human activity. Let us observe, however, that laws of this kind must be carefully distinguished from the law and method of Physical Science. The reason of this distinction is plain: the latter are mechanical, and pertain to a grand Mechanism; but Man is not a machine. Were he some such sort of Thing,—not a Person to will and choose, but a determinately moved and driven Thing,—then, indeed, the question suggested by the horrible torture-chamber at Avignon would never have been answered in more than one way.

The kind of Law we seek may be more definitely apprehended if I give a few moments' consideration to some recent endeavours of speculative thinking on the subject. They have not been very prolific in results; and therefore what is to be said will easily lie in brief compass.

Tentative systems, or the rudiments of systems framed to meet the demands of exact Science, have of late years issued in theoretic Sociology. Its conception is attributed by zealous disciples to the French founder of Positivism, who wrote on the subject himself, and laid down rules for the guidance of those who were to work at its elaboration. The curious point attaching to these rules is that, as he

observes, they exactly reverse the method of the Inductive Sciences. Within its own strict limits every Inductive Science subjects its Universal laws —those especially which involve hypotheses—to a verification repeated from time to time by every fresh investigator. And it is on this pivot of experimentation that the certitude of such sciences always turns triumphantly. But the method of Comtist Sociology *inverts*—we ought perhaps to say annihilates—this procedure. The results of experience are to be verified by the Universal laws of Human Nature; and such laws are to be received as laws already known to us: a principle which may seem in danger of assuming the chief points in debate,—assuming them, that is, by an *unconscious* process, familiar enough in the reading of those who study the history of Speculation. Comte's plan was to analyze and generalize the whole intellectual annals of Mankind. He wrote (quite naturally) a Comtian Philosophy of History. There is, of course, as much room for theorizing here as in his analysis and classification of the sciences. Indeed, Mr. Mill considers both these encyclopædic labours of almost equal value. To any one who accepts late scientific appreciations of Comte's philosophic arrangements, this praise must appear the reverse of complimentary.*

* For an estimate of Comte's bookish unreality as regards Physical Science, I need only refer to Professor Huxley and Mr. Herbert Spencer. Concerning our special subject of Mental Science, Mill has sufficiently exposed the absurdity of substituting for Psychology a new version of Gall and Spurzheim, vastly inferior to the original. In Metaphysics Comte was simply uninformed, and could not have

But whatever his analytic data were worth, they had, it appears, little final influence on his Sociology; the outcome of which was to assign the true development of the human Race not to its character as formed by action and interaction, but to its speculative opinions. And this conclusion, when applied to social life, issues (wonderful to relate) in the absolute control of existence by Positive thinkers armed with despotic powers. The idea of a controlling despotism Comte drew from his Roman Catholic education: Positive thought was of course the *ne plus ultra* of his own Humanity.

Enquiring further, we pass over M. Comte's later vagaries on the subject of Polity, and ask with some curiosity in what light the required laws of Human Nature have appeared to recent thinkers more or less imbued with the leading doctrines of Positivism? Speaking generally, we find that, though elevated to the rank of laws, these desiderata are merely *averages;* in other words, they are generalized facts. They do not, therefore, possess the essential quality of being in themselves "genetic." You will more fully perceive the value of this distinction if I observe that an average death-rate is useful for the information of Life-Assurance Offices, but the generalized

explained the difference between an absolute idea and a logical abstraction. It is curious that when systematizing Biology, he fell into the same inversion of the Inductive process as he did respecting Sociology, and based the special upon the general—an error properly exposed by Mr. Huxley. Though praising Comte's historical preparations, Mill says, "He has not created Sociology . . . he has done nothing in it which does not require to be done over again, and better."

fact, *per se*, does not enable us to lengthen life. The contrary is true of the biological laws which govern mortality: their object is to promote health and length of days. Another mischief arising from averages,—perhaps I ought to say another *fallacy*, —is that, if looked at, as they have been vulgarly looked at, in the light of genetic principles, they confuse most important Moral distinctions. For, when we come to action, the Truths we must keep steadily in mind are not drawn from any average standard of *what is*, but from the Philosophy of *what ought to be.* And this Philosophy, depicted for us in the living portraiture of History, shines out as the reflection of noble achievements—the lesson of good Exemplars. As a law written on our hearts, it is the high aim of which Aristotle speaks,— the poet's thought:

"We may make our lives sublime!"

Yet in such lofty lives the average-compilers see only *exceptions* to their law. Nay, more—with the true spirit of average-making intellects, they class great Spirits as eccentricities. Hume's and Buckle's social laws are suggestive of some Utilitarian Physical Geography, which might account plains the true beauty of the world, and mountains its deforming wastes. In our world of Humanity we have reason to thank God that there are high summits bathed in brightness, since lower levels lie too much in shadow. The ideal "*ought to be*," (in itself the end and fulfilment of Man's Being,) is, when personified

by individual men, its actual realization.* It exists in our world oftener than ordinary minds suspect, and it interprets our hidden Life for us. To show this was the task and glory of Charles Dickens. You, my young friends, will find that the *average* assumed to be the "*what is*," can *never* in point of fact guide you correctly. You will discover that the difference between man and man, in regard of such virtues (for example) as Truth, Justice, or Disinterestedness,—is a chasm so vast as to resemble a great gulf placed between them. If you believe that every man has his price, you will be wrong. If you think that all pursue their own interest, because it is their private interest, experience will contradict your theory. And as for Truth,—the *contrast* between individual men in this respect, is as great as between Mephistopheles and some saintly spirit walking in the light of God's presence.

One inference from what has been just said is this: No moral law can be truly Moral unless it contains what I will venture to call an *Ideal* element. But by this word Ideal, I am far from understanding anything unreal. The element I mean is a growing-point for which the soil of our present life is not always rich enough.† Every now and then we see

* Hence the Philosophy of teaching by example,—a philosophy presupposed in every chapter of the Old Testament. So, with Cicero, History is "Testis Temporum, lux Veritatis, vita Memoriæ, magistra Vitæ, nuntia Vetustatis." *De Orat.* II. 36.

† The sense of this inadequacy is one reason why the life Man now lives must always appear not only unsatisfying,—but (what is far more exact) essentially *disparate* to Man's higher nature.

what strikes us as a superhuman stature. Such realized ideals satisfy, so to speak, the æsthetic instincts of our moral sense—they are the "fair souls" which the great German poet could admire even when they differed widely from himself. Human spirits, thus beautiful by reason of their words and works, are, by the fact of their existence, verifications of the truly genetic law after which we have been enquiring. They are rainbow clouds—witnesses giving us encouragement to "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us."

It is but just towards Comte, on whom we have animadverted, to add that he felt the need of an Ideal, and condemned his whole scientific system without it. Like Mr. Mill, he was on that account himself condemned as unfaithful to Positive thinking.

Another inference seems plain. Little need be looked for from the modern science of Sociology at present. Mr. Herbert Spencer, who has thought and written on the subject, entertains small hope of its results for many years to come. "Very little is," he says, "to be expected." *

Without accepting every reason he gives for this conclusion, there may remain with most people a strong persuasion of its general correctness. Another position of Mr. Spencer's will command assent. He severely censures the political schemer who, by means "of a legislative apparatus, properly devised and worked with due dexterity, ... expects to

* *Study of Sociology*, p. 390.

get out of a stupid people the effects of intelligence, and to evolve from inferior citizens superior conduct."* By these words he expresses that deep-felt necessity which interests us in the belief that propagandism of Moral distinctions is a duty incumbent on each and all of us. The noble foundations of Oxford were intended to make missionaries of civilization at the very least. That vocation belongs to our University. Some of us here may teach the teachers in Church and State—at all events the teachers who leaven the masses of this country. Would not our vast lower classes be better for the solemn lesson that the Law of Right and Wrong is true for us, and therefore must be true for us always? That, being absolute, it has its issue in a sphere where justice is done—a final Empire of Retribution?

Or, state the lesson in a converse manner. Set out from the recompence of the Reward; the future Good or Evil which constitutes a natural Law of Retribution. The awe inspired by this tremendous Law of Laws,—the strength of which arms Death with his terror and his sting,—springs from the knowledge that Retributive Justice metes out to

* "Just as the perpetual-motion schemer hopes, by a cunning arrangement of parts, to get from one end of his machine more energy than he puts in at the other; so the ordinary political schemer is convinced that out of a legislative apparatus, properly devised and worked with due dexterity, may be had beneficial state-action without any detrimental reaction. He expects to get out of a stupid people the effects of intelligence, and to evolve from inferior citizens superior conduct." *Study of Sociology*, p. 6.

every one the Judgment of his noblest Ideal; that it follows always the strict rule of the "*Ought to do*" —the "*Ought so to be.*" Bring this truth home to the Pharisee. He asks no longer what the publican is, but what he himself ought to have been—yet is not. Let it come home to yourselves; and you may, I trust, see it in a more hopeful light. That higher life to which your best nature prompts you, cannot, if matured, continue without its glorious fruit. If you can rise above self, you shall attain far more than self can give. Despised, it may be, now, you shall receive honour then. Listen to the better voice that pleads in your heart, and you will turn a deaf ear to the whispers of sloth, sensuality, and sin.

I began this Lecture with a picture, terrible yet true. High Heroic questions take us away from the trivialities and plausibilities of existence. Pharisaism is the self-flattering comparison with other men. Average Morality, elevated into a Moral or rather an Un-moral law of life, is really nothing better than gross Pharisaism. Men look into the statistics of gambling, fraud, swindling, drunkenness, violence, murderous assaults, and kickings to death. Folding their hands, they utter a devout "God, I thank Thee." Yet these barbarities are but vulgar versions of their own loose talk, small envies, and gentlemanly scepticism; their absolute neglect of Duty, and of all that raises Man above the brute. Now, put aside for the moment easy indifference, and look at stern moral issues.

I have placed a question before you—very whole-

some because very extreme,—but I should like you to make it still more stringent. Robe it in whatever vesture seems most influential to your own judgment. Only let the case be a *plain, concrete, human* problem of the choice between Right and Wrong. Above all, keep it clear from all subtle refinings, and analytic oppositions of Science, falsely so-called. In order that you may do so, let every consideration of self-interest, self-pleasing, or even self-ease—every warm sympathetic influence of natural affection—be on the side of speaking and acting an untruth. Make the consequences of truthfulness as horrible as you can. Place torments almost intolerable before your mind's eye. Think that you have to do with persons who feel (as Mr. Mill wrote) "a real pleasure in inflicting, or seeing the infliction of pain." With such torments and such tormentors full in view, say, first, have you any doubt whether Right and Wrong is a shadowy or a *real* distinction?—whether it is not, in this extreme case, a Reality, which neither self-interest nor self-ease, nor even natural sympathy and love, can dissolve into a good man's dream? And have you any honest doubt in your heart, that the *Fiat* of volition which will finally give outward shape and substance to this inward Reality, is also an actual humanly Existent Power? Upon this ground only are you justified in prophesying that if you now receive these evil things, you will finally be comforted, whilst they who receive their good things, *so appraised by base spirits*—the delights of voluptuous cruelty—will then be tormented. And which will righteously

be found the more severe?—the torments they now inflict, or the torments of Retribution? No primitive Christian had a doubt on this question.

Say next what ought you to do? If you hesitate, let a heathen moralist tell you—

"Summum crede Nefas animam præferre pudori."

If you cannot feel sure of yourself, what would you wish to do? What will you desire for the dearest Life of your soul to choose?

And now: Do not omit to make a present practical use of this question—the old question we have had before—Will pitted against Iron. Recal to yourselves the fact, that the unswerving Rightness which is imperative *in extremes* must *à fortiori* be a duty when to render it is an *easier* thing. If you ought to maintain the truthfulness of your life, even at the cost of offering that life as a sacrifice—*what* ought you to do when the world smiles upon you, when the freshness of youth and health throbs joyously in each free pulse? The eye of Retributive Justice has looked upon many and great masteries, since martyrs first were crowned! That same eye looks searchingly into all temptations "common to Man." Wilt thou, then, full in sight of that Divine Eye, sell thy soul for gold, for passion, for perversity—for *next to nothing?* Art thou so poor a creature as not to fight against thy foe? Art thou so blind as not to discerd the fast-coming captivity? If it be true of civil liberty—

"Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow,"

surely, surely, to lie down and yield to Sin is the act of a Moral dastard, of a degenerate enervated spirit! This is Oxford, not Capua; you are English young men, not worn-out and spirit-weary barbarians!

At all events, do not part with the Idea of an absolute Rightness—valid now, and valid always—a Truth to live and die in. As we have set it out this morning, it is not science, but a preparation for science. It is of the nature of a moral judgment; and stands in the like relation to Science as that which Faith bears to Knowledge. Both are the preparations and precursors of some deeper and clearer attainment. In proportion as the mind of any man, who judges or believes by a pure insight, makes progress in morality and spiritual intelligence, he becomes *more* highly endowed with the powers needful for certitude, philosophic, as well as religious. Faith ripens into knowledge, Judgment into science. The gain to us is great. We are in the condition of men "who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." We confirm our primary moral decision by the verification of our own satisfactory moral development. We do more than confirm,—we *extend* the field of our insight. We look (that is) through an improved optic glass, endowed with superior definition and penetration. We see farther, we see more,—and more exactly. At first, we saw that the distinction between Right and Wrong was valid for us, and that we ought to be guided by it. Neither could we help inferring, that to be *imperative* on us, it must be valid for all time, under all changes,

and beyond the life we are now living. But, superior insight enables us to see the ultimate *Why* and *How*: why we ought to obey this same moral law,—and how we shall apply it truly on each given occasion. And the answers to these two questions make our knowledge all of one piece, and thus give to its validity another kind of verification.

We have put the Law of Retribution on a Moral trial this morning. The sentence besought was that of a concrete moral Judgment, respecting a crucial case and Question.

Next Sunday, I hope to put the same law on an *un*-moral trial, and so to approach the enquiry, "Where lies our higher appeal?" I shall begin with Scepticism, and leave absolutely *im*moral views till we have delved more deeply down into the foundations of Morality.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON PP. 90-2 *ante*.

Let it be observed that the Sociology here described is something wholly distinct from what is termed Social Science by the philanthropists, whose useful Congresses have earned so many welcomes and acknowledgments. The difference may not seem very unlike that which subsists between M. Comte's Politique and the Constitutional Science, or art of Statesmanship employed by English Politicians.

Any true Sociology will have to ground itself upon the *data* inductively collected by students of working Social Science throughout its various departments. And the latter, to be used practically, necessitates a frequent appeal to legislation, which in turn is closely linked with Sociology. It may therefore be worth remarking that in the article before cited, Macaulay censures James Mill as follows:—"It is remarkable that Mr. Mill, with all his affected display of precision, has here given a description of the ends of government far

less precise than that which is in the mouths of the vulgar. The first man with whom Mr. Mill may travel in a stage coach will tell him that government exists for the protection of the *persons* and property of men. But Mr. Mill seems to think that the preservation of property is the first and only object." Yet, curiously enough, he does *not* censure him for omitting from his description the grand objects of promoting the moral together with the physical well-being of the citizens,—their educated intelligence together with their productive powers and accumulations of property.

These omissions are placed in a sufficiently clear light by the several tendencies of Social Science operative at the present day; and every such correction is extremely valuable, since our heartiest assent must be given to the principle enunciated by Macaulay in his next following Essay:—"We say with Bacon—'Non, nisi postremo loco, ad maxime generalia veniatur.' In the present enquiry, the science of human nature is the 'maxime generale.' To this the Utilitarian rushes at once, and from this he deduces a hundred sciences. But the true philosopher, the inductive reasoner, travels up to it slowly, through those hundred sciences, of which the science of government is one."

LECTURE III.

SCEPTICISM WHEN THOROUGH.

LECTURE III.

St. Matthew vi. 23.

"If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

THESE words are true of Nations, as well as of individual Men. In observing their verification by events, we more frequently find it in the histories of Peoples, than in private biographies. The reason is that cause and effect, when written large, are more conspicuous and less mistakeable.

You may remember how Aristotle lays down a principle similar in meaning, and not very dissimilarly expressed from the wording of my text.

Although chiefly applicable to religious and moral darkness, the same principle holds true in the sphere of intellect. It is natural that such should be the case. These two provinces of human life are really two separate aspects of a Reason one and indivisible. This Reason we may cultivate, in differing spheres; and from so doing we expect different results.

Compare England with Caffre-Land. See the enormous superiority of her intellectual eye. And is there not an enormous superiority of moral eyesight also? It has been the boast of England that in Morality her light was the steadiest and brightest

among civilized nations. For example, she claimed the honour of always keeping her word. And we remember periods when her commercial honour and her political promises were held out as being equally irreproachable.

We tried to look through an unsophisticated Moral eye last Sunday. We are now to enquire into one kind of sophistication. The positions of an Atheist or a Fatalist respectively, deny the *power* or the *use* of seeing anything to bodily sense invisible. The position of a Sceptic is to question *both* use and power; but not to deny either absolutely.

All these three characters are, in private affairs, likely to be guided by feelings which result from circumstances,—that is (in scientific speech) from their environment. If national affairs permit the reception of such doctrines on a grand scale, the effect of each and all is to degrade public opinion—to excuse, and therefore let loose, the worst passions of Mankind.

We will study Scepticism this morning in the person of David Hume. I choose him as being a typical Sceptic of keen and cultivated intellect. It is convenient, too, that we need not be over-reticent about him, since he long ago became a public property. I see no reason, however, for dwelling on his private career. It is sufficient to say, that his character was good-natured, vain, and social. Pleasure loving,—on which account he betrays certain immoral and more *un*-moral tendencies. His sceptical writings are extremely important. Their

pleasant banter earned them immediate influence in France. English people enjoy ironies only to a limited degree, and are often as much puzzled by them as enlightened. In our day Hume's progeny is chiefly Materialistic, in the immoral and irreligious sense of that ambiguous word.

His great recommendations for our purpose are two. One, that he is *thorough* in his Scepticism: with him the world is all an optical shadow. The other, that he is a distinctly *modern* Sceptic.

Ancient Scepticism, we may remark, is of a totally different cast. As has been observed,* the Greek assailed feeling and sensation first of all,—whereas Hume assumes their veracity, and proceeds to attack universal truths, because not contained in the empirical circle — the circle of sensuous perception. The issue is universal Doubt:—

"We have, therefore," he says, "no choice left but betwixt a false reason and none at all. For my part, I know not what ought to be done in the present case." And again, "The *intense* view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return?" †

A man in the posture of mind thus described is,

* By Hegel, *Die Logik* (Encycl.), sec. 39.

† *Treatise of Human Nature*, Bk. I., P. 4, 7, (Green and Grose, i. p. 548.) A knowledge of the *Treatise* is indispensable to real students. On its value and relation to Hume's later works, see Mr. Green's Preface to vol. i., and Mr. Grose's remarks, iii., pp. 37-9 and 75-7.

or ought to be, reduced to inaction. Hume represents this natural result as follows:—

"I am," he adds (just after the last quotation),—"I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of the use of every member and faculty."

Of course, upon many men the natural effect would be either Pessimism or Indifferentism. Hume had too much of the Boswell about him to become a Pessimist; but he saw that, if his use or misuse of Reason thrust him down into darkness, he could hardly expect Reason to raise him up again. He reminds us of our text,—"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!" The philosopher felt at times constrained to *forsake* Reason. He appealed against her to the commonest of all common sense.

"Philosophy," he tells us, "expects a victory more from the returns of a serious good-humoured disposition, than from the force of reason and conviction."

The most wonderful circumstance remains behind. Conviction was, after all, not a rational conviction; only a persuasion convenient in practice. The very next sentence runs thus:—

"In all the incidents of life we ought still to preserve our scepticism. If we believe that fire warms, or water refreshes, 'tis only because it costs us too much pains to think otherwise."

Every honest thinker must be glad of Hume's surprising outspokenness. It is more than a little surprising in a person educated by French Jesuits, and used to see economies of speech, reticences of

all sorts, valued and practised every day. Under any circumstances, such cool, half-bantering, sceptical talk, seems a phenomenon to be accounted for in a young man of seven-and-twenty. How easily does the rogue laugh Actualities out of court, till nobody can tell the difference between a lake and a mirage! Common-sense people were used to speak with some confidence of the little fact that fire warms. Our young sage sets it down among disputable topics. Yet a man may keep this and other pet beliefs, *animi voluptatisque causâ*, as Cæsar says of British hares,—if, that is, he happens to fancy them! They are not worth the labour of extinguishing! Reality is thus vaporized into Credulity. And when we pass from the outer to the inner world, Ideas appear with Hume no safer than Realities. They are, the relics of impressions, once made through the senses, and since fallen dim. Hence, the idea of a mathematical point is simply impossible. That which has neither length, breadth, nor thickness, never impressed itself upon any sense. Exact Equality and Inequality, a Right line, the Infinitude of geometricians, are no ideas proper to our poor human mind. As a matter of fact, Infinity of all kinds is inconceivable; and with the Inconceivable, we, who are the slaves of "every schoolboy's" intelligence, can have nothing whatever to do. The universals which people have called primary truths must either be refracted palpabilities, or they must be accounted Nothings. Henceforth let no man look in the face such reasons as he may suppose himself to possess

for any fact, natural law, moral distinction, or metaphysical first-ground. He who asks for Truth does so on pain of being driven to reject, with our young sage, and with a great many schoolboys, all belief, all reasoning, all first principles; and to consider no one opinion more likely or more probable than another. And what now has become of our Moral Realities?

In his more mature years, Hume lost the fire, but not the frosts, of his youth. His delight is to congeal some living Truth. He compounds a freezing mixture, and leaves it to do all he wants. The work is slow; but (as Hume feels) it is sure. He is in no haste to burn down anything: the snows of Russia are stronger than the flames of Moscow. Upon this mode of procedure he bestows the name of "Easy Philosophy." He contrasts it with the toil and austerity of abstract disquisitions. In a mild, forbearing way, he tells us that, in his time, "the matter was carried further, even to the rejection of all profound reasoning, or what is commonly called *Metaphysics*."* Yet accurate results possess, he adds, among other good qualities, the considerable advantage of subserving easy and humane philosophy.

There has for some time existed another and less flattering name for this celebrated system. That name is current in certain parts of the European continent which do not lie within the boundaries of France. The working thinkers of those parts call this holiday wisdom, a "parlour-fire philosophy."

* *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, S. i. (G. & G., iv. 6.)

Within the boundaries of France it was, long before Hume wrote, esteemed the only polite philosophy; and from Charles the Second's reign downwards, its essential principles—or negations of principle—have never been altogether lost on this side the Channel. We must add that to French Scepticism manner is quite as important as matter. Gibbon learned from a Frenchman that peculiar irony, which convinced his opponents how impossible it is to refute a sneer. From another Frenchman, Hume derived his pleasantry of Doubt. What praise so high among advanced thinkers in those years, as the glory of resembling Voltaire! And who more hard to answer?

For the appreciation of a philosophy, as respects either matter or manner, no method is so ready as the well-worn, but odious, path of *comparison*. Contrast with our Franco-Scot the life and labours of his great North-German antagonist. Kant was himself of Scottish descent; but born and bred in an atmosphere very different from that breathed by Hume. At his mother's side, and not in a Jesuit seminary, the Scoto-Teuton acquired the first principles of Truth. All his days long Kant held fast, and exercised, those firm *man-like* virtues, which *had been* most prized in England during previous generations. His manner of subsistence was to work for his own livelihood. In management, he showed himself exact—a good accountant. Slow to determine, he was of inflexible resolution; his existence uniform, some would say monotonous; a celibate, because he

found it hard to wive and thrive; no traveller, though delighting in books of travels; but a stay-at-home, industrious, self-controlled MAN. Life with him was both honest and earnest; and his philosophy was a part of his life. What he did, he did for all time. How could he otherwise move Mankind by an influence obtained at sixty-four? No verbal economies in his books: his much-criticized obscurities sprang from a jostling of thoughts too numerous to pass singly through the portals of speech. To quit Hume's flowery rhetoric, and open a volume of the stiff German, is like exchanging a gay parterre filled with exotics for a native forest, —vast, vigorous, tangled, high-arching, and sublime! The one is a sauntering ground, where ladies meet a smiling sage, and talk in a ready indeterminate way. The other is a dim retreat, a silent shade, fit for manly thought with a real meaning in it; or for the deliberate Moralities of a reasoning Will. Our intellectual eye looks down long perspectives, solemn, perchance sombre, but well repaying a diligent life-long exploration.

The youth who disciplines his mind with Euclid, Kant, and Aristotle, will need no other intellectual athletics to give it tone and muscularity.

I have dwelt at some length upon the characters of thought, speech, and action, displayed by two very typical philosophers. My reason is this. For the object we have in view, philosophy must be contemplated not as an *abstraction*, but as a human *activity*. Natural Religion is the going forth of a

Man's whole natural Being. Philosophy in its highest aspect is nothing less than a phase of Natural Religion. The man who philosophizes brings forth his innermost Life, and sets it in the light of his own consciousness. He examines himself; criticizes; estimates the strength and limits of his own Reason as a thinking Power, a volitional Power, and a Power sensitive to that which is noble, beautiful, divine. And when this is done; and his entire Being is (if we may so express it) penetrated and lightened by the Light dwelling in his soul, the true Manhood of the man goes forth to his Race; the fire burns within him, and he speaks with his tongue. Our studies here make us know the wonderful mightiness of speech—how great a matter that little fire kindleth. A solitary man (like Kant) evokes his central Life into such utterance as time and strength permit. Soon it becomes to a reflective portion of mankind, not his but *their* Life; their thought and being.

Just as heat is a mode of Motion, so is Philosophy a mode of Humanity. Springing out from elevated Souls, as from unsealed fountains, it flows down to each and all of us, like a vast, many-voiced Life-stream,—as it were a thousand times a thousand lives and tongues in one. This manifold voice speaks to us in the cool of our day; in the darkness of our vision-haunted night; or when the shadow of Death falls athwart our path. Whether we will hear or whether we will forbear, it speaks always of great things. It tells us that the true heritage of our Race

is to be *transfigured;* to live a nobler, yet a human life, when things mutable and material shall have perished or have been changed! Physicists inform us that our sun is slowly burning out his fires; that the forces which move our planetary system are waning now, and are doomed to wane away. Then, its orbs must collapse. Then, our cheerful Earth, with her seasons, colours, light and shade, rest and motion, will cease to be a Human World. But, if Philosophy reads Earth and Heaven aright, we may hope to grow, while those glittering orbs wax old,—we shall *be*, and be *good*, when they decline and disappear. Thus looked at, a Man is of more worth than a world. What, then, is the worth of a *whole world of mankind?*

We can only calculate this sum in terms which transcend our finite understanding. We have to raise our known Moral Distinctions, by the power of infinitude. We have to contemplate them in the dawn-light of an Eternal sphere, no longer cribbed, cabined, and confined, but free, effectual, life-giving, absolute. Briefly, we must contemplate them in the dawn-light of a futurity of Retribution.

In the ordinary course of events we are all very slow to apprehend the possibilities of these great things. What we cannot paint in our imaginations we are apt to put aside as inconceivable; not knowing that the eye of Reason may see far beyond that horizon where Fancy's wing grows weary. We are slower still to connect our *unfathomable* Future with our *shallow* Present. How can our slight duties, or

our little wrongs, now done, stand related to Retribution and Immortality? Not at once, but slowly, and after a time, we learn the secret. When the scars of sins, long cicatrised, have ached for years, we begin to suspect it. Life, sorrow, and death-beds, teach us the rest.

A small seed, we know, if cast into the earth, may grow up a stately tree—a shadow and shelter from the storm—a house of life to birds of the air which come and lodge among its branches. With us, too, a seed is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. We have, also, another sowing and another harvest. He that soweth to his flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption. A little seeming error, a venial fault, a hidden bad propensity, makes the whole head sick, the whole heart faint. It is the little rift, that widens till it silences the music of the soul; it is the little speck that moulders away our fruits of purity and peace; it is the little worm that eats out a life which should bloom beyond the grave. It slays the Spirit, whose heritage was (as we said) to *be*—and be *good*—when suns and planets decline and disappear.

One striking lesson more remains to us. A slight falsity—nay, even a *carelessness* of Truth—may silence the music, and perplex the plain speech of Natural Religion. It may moulder and eat out the vitality of philosophic Thinking, till Thought corrupts, and becomes unwholesome—poisonous—contagious. The special wonder is, that the rift, the speck, the worm may appear to be far away from the central core and

soul of the philosophy. As we develope our main topic, the Reality of my statements may become increasingly clear to you. And the easiest method of attaining our object will be to contrast, yet more exactly, the two philosophers, together with their systems already placed in antithesis. It is not, of course, my intention to criticize either system. Kant has been annotated, controverted, explained a hundred times over. Hume is now edited and commented upon with care and fulness. My plan will, therefore, be to marshal certain small-seeming falsities in a *human*, not an *ab extrâ*, line of view; and to range over against them the great truths of Moral Distinctions and Moral Retribution.

Suppose, then, we ask ourselves, why we are bound so to will and act, that the principle upon which our volition proceeds might safely serve as a governing maxim for the law of the whole Race? This "Why?" (you will perceive), is the pivot on which the justice and necessity of a final Retribution turn. Now, what connection is here apparent with the following common-sense trivialities? Why must a stone cast upwards fall? Why must two and two make four, —not three, nor five?

Yet consider. Are these trivialities really obvious to common-sense, when we ask, first, Can we explain the "*must*" in either of these latter cases? Next: If we cannot, is there any principle by virtue of which we *ought to accept the Inexplicable?* In point of fact, whoever answers those trivial questions, has penetrated into the inner substance and heart of the

universe. Hume's contention was that they are unanswerable; we may put them amongst beliefs to be kept *if we please;* but we can unshell no kernel of Truth by examining them. Kant asserted that they *are* answerable; that it is worth a life's devotion to answer them truly; and that, when answered, the consequences to Truth are *infinite.* And by Truth he meant human Truth; the Truth by which we ought, as men, to live,—the practical Truth which can translate us into a futurity of happier progress, when we come to die.

The problem I propose first to examine is the one which is most *abstract.* You may take it as a rule, that whatever principle seems at first sight very useless, otiose, and recondite, is in fact most likely to move the world of Men. This wholesome rule underlies the excessive dread, felt by ordinary Englishmen, of opinions which appear in their eyes poetical, enthusiastic, or remote from common sense. Their dread, though extreme, is by no means absurd. A false abstraction of Political Economy may move and mislead the masses. Even educated minds often mix together in one vague "*delenda est,*" a plain evil, an innocuous usage, and an institution positively beneficial. Throughout our individual life, some undefined thought, some proverb, some proposition so large as to sweep a world of impulses into its net, comes back upon us in our quiet hours, makes us uneasy when we might be at rest, and stirs us up to spasmodic action. The recollections or regrets that cause our cheeks to burn, or our ears to tingle,

seem small in themselves, and often far away from immediate interests; but they move our innermost feelings notwithstanding.

At this moment the word "Unthinkable" is just such a motive Power. It appears strong enough to relegate many reasonings and more beliefs into an ostracism which may outlast at least one generation. Yet surely there is something shadowy, not to say spectral, about the dread which this word inspires. Who ever succeeded in "*thinking*" *himself?* Has any one of us the least conception what a Self is like,—how it exists,—how it energises? How many of us have settled the question of what constitutes *any* Individuality? Would it then be wise to say, —We are essentially Unthinkables, therefore we are *non*-entities? Yet some of us are tolerably substantial entities, in mind, will, and activity, corporeal and incorporeal. There is *to us* no stronger fact in the world, than that *you* are you, and *I* am I. The *force* of the fact as a basis for Rights and Duties, Property and Responsibility, and as subversive of Socialism, Communism, and other fraternal modes of robbery and wrong, appears to consist in its being a *Concrete*, not at all an abstract Truth. For this reason the *non*-entity of a Meum and Tuum is not maintainable in a concrete shape; yet it has been, and is, maintained on grounds of an imaginative and easy-philosophy description. The more fancifully abstract, the more likely to be found unanswerable.

On approaching Hume's most renowned abstrac-

tion, we feel that a kind of awe is inspired by it. No one can exactly revere Hume; but no informed person can help being impressed by his power. And this strength of his, (some of it springing from his masked earnestness,) is by no means illusory. Hume was (as the systems of philosophy tell us) influenced by the great French Illumination; and, in his turn, he influenced it. This means, in plainer language, that he shared in forcing on that vast movement of thought, which seemed not unlikely to change the whole face of civilized society. It first entranced, and then disappointed ardent spirits, such as our Balliol Southey, Cantabrigian Coleridge, and Wordsworth affiliated to both Universities. It failed where they expected it would succeed; it had no effect in elevating men's spirits by new maxims of purity and peace. In this sense Madame Roland and a host of others lived and died in vain. In this sense the Goddess of Reason was worshipped to a purpose worse than vain. Yet the movement was not ineffectual. It did alter the map of Europe. It has not been without its consequences to the map of France. We English felt a blast of the whirlwind years ago! We feel it with some distinctness now! Whenever such is the case, we are sure there has been a moral Force at work, or (as some in this instance prefer to say) a very immoral one. Hume, like others of the Illumination, had (I fear) a criminal intent upon Morality. He approached the object aimed at, first through abstract argument, secondly by analysing, that is, dissolving away, an elementary

factor of Human Nature. The effect of both assaults was to make Morality Conventional.

We will (as I said) examine the abstraction first. I allude, of course, to Hume's celebrated theory of Customary Association.

At a glance we may perceive what a power is here for easy-philosophy to handle. Habit is second nature. We are all the creatures of Habit. Why should not Habit account for modern prejudice, and old-fashioned principle also? Why should it not make us think as we do think, on universal truths and on universal interests,—on our sociology, polity, Morality? If it can be shown that we survey the inanimate world,—Matter, Force, Law,—through glasses fitted to our minds' eyes by Habituation, is it certain that we do not also survey the intelligent and moral world by aid of similar optics? At all events, Reason cannot—does not—govern Moral Choice. Justice being some kind of Utility, property is no more than a customary arrangement: respect for human Rights—perchance for human life (either our own or other people's)—or, again, for human truth, rectitude, purity, may well be neither more nor less than convenient fashions of feeling.*

* Read, *first*, the following non-ethical propositions :—

(1) "A blemish, a fault, a vice, a crime; these expressions seem to denote different degrees of censure and disapprobation; which are, however, all of them, at the bottom, pretty nearly of the same kind or species. The explication of one will easily lead us into a just conception of the others; and it is of greater consequence to attend to things than to verbal appellations."—*Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, App. iv. (G. and G. iv. 287.)

As customs, we may deal with them all; as customs, we cannot say that any one of them holds good in any life but this. Yet if we cannot affirm a vitality

(2) "Most people will readily allow, that the useful qualities of the mind are virtuous, because of their utility. This way of thinking is so natural, and occurs on so many occasions, that few will make any scruple of admitting it. Now this being once admitted, the force of sympathy must necessarily be acknowledg'd. Virtue is consider'd as means to an end. Means to an end are only valued so far as the end is valued. But the happiness of strangers affects us by sympathy alone. To that principle, therefore, we are to ascribe the sentiment of approbation which arises from the survey of all those virtues that are useful to society, or to the person possess'd of them. These form the most considerable part of morality."—*Treatise* III. 6. (G. and G. ii. 372.) Compare the fuller statement of the Principles of Utility and Love of Approbation, *Inquiry*, etc., S. III. P. ii. *sub fin.* (G. and G. iv. 196), and S. V. P. ii. *init.* (G. and G. iv. 207.)

Next consider the *consequences* deducible as to Moral Distinctions, taken from the outspoken *Treatise.*

(1) "The rules of morality are not conclusions of our reason."—Bk. III. i. 1. (G. and G. ii. 235.)

(2) "Moral Distinctions are not the offspring of reason. Reason is wholly inactive, and can never be the source of so active a principle as conscience, or a sense of morals."—*Ibid.* ii. 1 (p. 236).

(3) "In short, it may be establish'd as an undoubted maxim, that no action can be virtuous, or morally good, unless there be in human nature some motive to produce it, distinct from the sense of its morality."—*Ibid.* ii. 1 (p. 253).

(4) "A promise wou'd not be intelligible, before human conventions had establish'd it; and that even if it were intelligible, it would not be attended with any moral obligation."—*Ibid.* ii. 5 (p. 285).

And as to our Duty in regard of them:—

(1) "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."—*Ibid.* Bk. II. iii. 3 (p. 195).

(2) [A few sentences further on] "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger."

I quote freely from Hume, because his writings show much that is

in Moral maxims apart from our habituations,—if there is no essential distinction between Right and Wrong, indelible, and pertaining to the eternal Then, —surely there can be no cause why we should act upon it *Now*. Farewell, a long farewell, to the hopes of good, and the terrors of wicked men! Farewell to moral certitudes, and moral restraints; above all, to the Belief in a just Retribution!

In this manner the question, all important to Natural Religion, assumes an *abstract* shape. Have we, or have we not, any ground for asserting that, independently of us and our transitory customs and habits of thought, there exists any uniform connection between things or events themselves?—any nexus binding them together? This question may be answered with the *same non*-ethical result in two opposite directions. Each of us may say, "All things are fluent, and I cannot control them." Or, "All things are necessarily determined, and I can

generally veiled by those on whom his mantle has descended. They show, for instance, the *connection* existing between intellectual Scepticism and a denial (direct or indirect) of Independent Morality. For its principles the Sceptic substitutes maxims and motives which appear non-Ethical when viewed in the light of an unsophisticated Conscience. It is well to see with Hume what premises lead to such and such conclusions; it is well to see conversely how a given set of conclusions stand connected with such and such premises. I do not, however, mean to charge all modern theorists with an intentional concealment of un-moral pedigrees. Many among them are guilty less of conspiracy than of larceny; they have been at Hume's feast of knowledge, and stolen only a few of the scraps.

Against one poisonous scrap in particular we must protest,—the practice, that is, of adducing motives which rule "the baser sort" as a fair representation of Man's Moral Nature.

alter nothing,—no, not even myself." It may seem, too, that all things must be *either* fluent *or* determined. If we hesitate to say which, we stand convicted of Ignorance. Whichever way we do pronounce, we stand convicted of Impotence; because either way our volitions remain without influence upon the stream of Events. They are, in fact, a *part of it.*

Hume approached Causation from the side which in his day was most obscure. He censures what he calls beginning at the wrong end,—"examining," that is, "the faculties of the Soul, the influence of the Understanding, and the operations of the Will." For these, he substituted "the operations of body and brute unintelligent matter," and proceeds to discuss them *more suo.** A very notable circumstance is that in his *Inquiry* (which I am now quoting), as well as in his more outspoken and complete *Treatise*, there appears a want of separation between our perceptions of things outside us, and the emotions we feel stirring within us. They are confounded together under one general term—"impressions." "Ideas," the Entities of Plato, are with Hume less lively perceptions—pale shadows—poor relics of impressions passed away.†

* *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Sect. VIII., Part ii. (G. and G. iv. 76.)

† *Ibid.* Sect. II. (G. and G. iv. 13, 14.) "By the term *impression*, then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will. And impressions are distinguished from ideas, which are the less lively perceptions of which we are conscious, when we reflect on any of those sensations

As regards Causation* in the Natural world, the "imagination" receives from two successive objects an impression of *sequency*.† There happens, in fact,

or movements above mentioned." A few sentences before, he likens *ideas* to images reflected in a mirror truly, but in colours faint and dull. Compare *Treatise*, B. I. i. 7 (G. and G. i. 327): "An idea is a weaker impression," etc.; also pp. 375, 481.

The term "impression" is vague enough; but *what* shall we say to the following account of Causation (*Inquiry*, S. VII., G. and G. iv. 62)?—"This connexion, therefore, which we *feel* in the mind, this customary transition of the imagination from one object to its usual attendant, is the sentiment or impression from which we form the idea of power or necessary connexion. Nothing farther is in the case. Contemplate the subject on all sides, you will never find any other origin of that idea." Customary feeling, imagination, sentiment, impression—a sufficient account of the most essential among human "ideas"! And not the least attempt at discrimination! No thinker can form an adequate notion of Hume's unfixedness of speech, till he tries to write out the main principles of Hume's system. The curious question is, "How far is this laxity intentional?" It is at all events convenient.

* Causation is itself an *idea*. (See last Note.)

† Compare with *Inquiry* before cited, *Treatise*, B. I. iii. 14. (G. and G. i. 464.) "Such a relation can never be an object of reasoning, and can never operate upon the mind, but by means of custom, which determines the imagination to make a transition from the idea of one object to that of its usual attendant, and from the impression of one to a more lively idea of the other. However extraordinary these sentiments may appear, I think it fruitless to trouble myself with any farther inquiry or reasoning upon the subject, but shall repose myself on them as on establish'd maxims." A custom, an imagination, an impression; here are Natural Science and Moral Philosophy; and on the side of easy thought their foundations are complete. But suppose the Law of Nature's Uniformity is *not* an *objective* Truth; and Man not *in fact* the parent of his own immoral actions, there appears at once an end to all the Inductive Sciences, as well as to all human Accountability,—

"Decipimur *Specie* Recti."

a sequence of *impression upon impression.* Use and custom determine the *mind* to infer, or expect, still further sequences. To expect a sunrise, to infer that a human being will die, are examples of this *mental* determination.

"The necessity or power," he says, "which unites causes and effects, lies in the determination of the mind to pass from the one to the other."

Hence, we can say fire *will* burn, because *in our apprehension* this is true; but we cannot say fire *must* burn, if we mean thereby anything more than a "must" existing *in our own mind.* That such is Hume's meaning, seems ascertained beyond doubt by his very next sentence:—

"The efficacy or energy of causes is neither placed in the causes themselves, nor in the deity, nor in the concurrence of these two principles; but belongs entirely to the soul, which considers the union of two or more objects in all past instances. 'Tis here that the real power of causes is placed along with their connexion and necessity." *

To put the case in a few words, the "must" is true *for us;* but it may, or may *not,* be true for the Universe.

In the mouths of most men this phraseology would mean Idealism. In Hume's it meant blank intellectual Ignorance. Except as the means to an end he did not care to throw doubt on realities; he did care always to throw doubt on human understanding. But he could not do the one without doing the other.

* *Treatise,* B. I. iii. 14. (G. and G. i. 460.)

For if the elements of knowledge are doubtful, are we not barred from saying that realities are certain? On Hume's principles, says his latest editor, it is impossible to explain the world of knowledge.* So far as the natural world is concerned, we may act on the truth of Causation; but *behind each act* lies a wholesome reserve of Ignorance.

Can this reasoning be applied to the *Moral* world? Yes: Hume does so apply it. The "must" is here again true *for us.* The mind infers the same sequence in the actions of Men, as it did in the phenomena of nature, and for *precisely the same reasons.* Neither is there any perceivable difference in the necessity of the Causation, nor in the certainty of our expectation. Yet there *is* an inevitable difference between the two several cases—the Worlds without and within us; also between the conclusions severally to be drawn concerning them. These conclusions Hume leaves to his reader's sagacity. Both in the Natural and the Moral world, the efficacy of Cause is only empirically true *for us*, and therefore not absolutely true for the Universe. In the world without, what we call effect may be event; at least we cannot say it must be more. But then, here

* Mr. Green in *General Introduction*, I., S. 294. When my first four Lectures were written, this valuable Edition had not been published. The *Treatise* appeared in time for me to quote Mr. Green's *dictum* when preaching my third lecture, and to alter most of my references by adding to them the Oxford pagination.

In Hume's later years, he hid his *nihilisms* from common eyes by ostracising the contents of *Treatise*, B. I. Pts. ii. and iv.;—an "economy" which left his system philosophically baseless.

comes in the inevitable difference. What is true *for us* will necessarily be true for the world of *Morality*, because that world is not outside but *within* us. The one morally good thing is a good Will. If, therefore, the "*must be*" of the Will is true for us, it is true for the inner—that is, the moral sphere *in* which our Will moves.

Hume, of course, would prefer saying, wherein our Will "*is moved* by the strongest motive." On the "constant conjunction" of act and strongest motive, he uses the well-known, well-worn weapons of Fatalism,—or, as its modern advocates have re-named it, Determinism. He is equally emphatic on the general uniformity of human character, and the ease of consequent prediction concerning what each man will or will not do. Uniformity of character may be compared with the uniformity of inanimate nature so far as the power of prediction goes; and thus understood, we can, as Hume says, "*never free ourselves from the bonds of Necessity.*"* In the outside world we *think* the "must be," but cannot certainly *know* it. In the world within, what we think as true for

* "We feel that our actions are subject to our will on most occasions, and imagine we feel that the will itself is subject to nothing; because when by a denial of it we are provok'd to try, we feel that it moves easily every way, and produces an image of itself even on that side, on which it did not settle. This image or faint motion, we perswade ourselves, cou'd have been compleated into the thing itself; because, shou'd that be deny'd, we find upon a second trial, that it can. But these efforts are all in vain; and whatever capricious and irregular actions we may perform, as the desire of showing our liberty is the sole motive of our actions, we can never free ourselves from the bonds of necessity." *Treatise*, B. II. iii. 2. (G. and G. ii. 189.)

other men, that same "must" we cannot but lay upon *ourselves*. Thus, as natural Causation convicted us of Ignorance, so Moral Causation convicts us of Impotence; or at best of the bondage ensuing upon a balance struck between our lack of knowledge and our human heritage of imbecility.

It will not, I think, escape you that the more Motive resembles (as in some modern theories) an *efficient* or producing cause, and the farther it recedes from the Aristotelian idea of a *final* cause, or object of pursuit, the more absolute appears the subjection of Man to *mechanical* Law. His actions are enchained; his Will is determined by the "must be." And the chain becomes doubled in strength when individual character is looked upon as a fragment of universal character, and men are supposed to be like each other, as pebbles in a brook are like each other. The possibility of a powerful religious influence upon character was a thought foreign to Hume's mind; feeble, too (as it would seem), were his ideas of self-formation and self-reformation. Yet, without these last-named endowments, all that is Manlike in Humanity has vanished. For the crown and glory of our Human Nature, and its loftiest distinction from mere brute nature, is that we can elevate ourselves, improve our best faculties, enhance their vigour, form increasingly noble habits, and, by the exercise of self-discipline, mount high above our original selves.

Such, and nothing less, is the hope of self-change never relinquished by any human being, except an

incurable trifler, a madman, or a vice-besotted wretch. Yet it is *the* element of our nature which Hume is bent on dissolving away. Contrast this undying hope with his survey and estimate of Mankind, as described by his best biographer. It runs thus:—

"How very clearly we find these principles practically illustrated in his history! A disinclination to believe in the narratives of great and remarkable deeds proceeding from peculiar impulses: a propensity, when the evidence adduced in their favour cannot be rebutted, to treat these peculiarities rather as diseases of the mind, than as the operation of noble aspirations: a levelling disposition to find all men pretty much upon a par, and none in a marked manner better or worse than their neighbours: an inclination to doubt all authorities which tended to prove that the British people had any fundamental liberties not possessed by the French and other European nations."

Mr. Burton concludes by saying, "Such are the practical fruits of this Necessitarian philosophy." *

At first sight Hume's judgments appear less philosophic than worldly-wise. Every modern reader feels struck by the thought, "How like they are to the opinions which pass current along with another habitual maxim:—

"—— Quærenda pecunia primum est,
Virtus post nummos."

"Get Money, Money still!
And then let Virtue follow, if she will."

Yet, when we observe more closely, there appears this salient distinction between the vulgar worldling and the philosopher. Men given up to selfishness and a mercenary mind are always apt to see their fellow-men in a light reflected from themselves.

* Burton's *Life of Hume*, Vol. i., pp. 278-9.

Their own low standard of what is Right, True, and Good, causes them to maintain views which are a slander upon our highest Human Nature. Such views do, in fact, amount to a *disbelief* of not the highest only, but of all that is otherwise than very mean and base in Humanity. Yet these same men, who thus assert the empire of baseness, often express regret at their own shameful conclusions. The apology alleged for such conclusions is that they follow from a bad experience of mankind.

With Hume and his modern disciples—for Hume is a representative thinker—the case is exceedingly different. His low estimate of moral character sprang (precisely as his doctrine of Necessity sprang) from a *system* of thought, which he placed before the world as well-reasoned wisdom. Look at this kind of philosophy from any side you will, and its mischief-working power appears evidenced by its tone of ethical degradation. Morally, it is bad enough to do evil actions, but it is far worse to *justify* the wrongs, or to *have pleasure* in men that do them. Socially, the homage paid by vicious minds to virtue is often insincere, and may be downright hypocrisy. Yet it has a tendency to *check contagion*. Strange to say, Society sometimes runs far less risk from vicious practices than it does from vicious theories. A wicked play, poem, novel—worst of all, a wicked philosophy—is the most deadly of all pestilential ferments. The reason is plain. The *hateful* mien of vice is the gross, self-degraded example. The *attractive* mien is the plausible, glozing apology.

This, as Milton tells us, gives a most certain title to princedom in Hell. Neither can we ever forget, that the man who deliberately argues his intellect into any act of treason to his better nature, has barred himself from his only possible defence—the plea, namely, that he did it ignorantly, in unbelief.

It is because Hume is a representative thinker, that we find in his writings a subject for careful examination. He is sometimes spoken of as inheriting the mantle of Locke. But he wore it "with a difference." Locke was an Englishman, and an Oxonian. What Locke meant was Empiricism, not Scepticism. He had so intense a dread of Disbelief, that he did in the seventeenth century what Mr. Huxley has done in the nineteenth—he advocated the suppression of Atheism by penal enactments. On the other hand, *how* significant is the fact that Hume was Scoto-French, and educated in France, you may perceive if you recollect that Hamilton, like Kant, was Scoto-Teuton, although, unlike Kant, he was educated here in Oxford. Hume's philosophy (French-born) appertained to the French "Illumination"; neither is its essential Thought and Meaning even now dead in France: Hume was the great ancestor of Comte. The neat Frenchman founded (as we have said) a religion from which Heaven and God are shut out, along with a theoretic system perfectly well fitted to form the base of such a worship. Comtism is, we have said, very rarely accepted in its entire sweep; but it has leavened thought in France, England, and America, to an extent almost

incredible. At this moment it is giving rise to new and far-reaching speculative developments. The noteworthy fact seems plain,—what continues most leavening in Comte's theories, what is most alive and energetic in Positive thinking, may be implicitly found in Hume. From Hume, too, have floated down the more keen-edged maxims of Scepticism now circulated throughout English society. He may also safely be pronounced the true progenitor of its educated, easy, Indifferentism.

Yet, strange to say, the Logic of Events has thoroughly and absolutely confuted Hume. To see this distinctly, we must try to see with distinctness what was the indubitable but undeclared outcome of his ground-principles. They appear wide enough; for they relate to human life, abstract speculation, and the world we live in. And these correlative grounds of belief and action mutually supplement and support each other. What then was their Effect?

Life, says this Philosophy, is a poor thing—for each, for all; but nobody has a right to complain. A law of average Morality, bad enough to be average *baseness*, is entitled the Law of Human Nature. It is in practical every-day wisdom, what a law of Necessity or Determinism is in abstract or metaphysical reasoning. Happy men—or, at least, happy enough, if we do but know our own happiness! Accountability is impossible. It is a task too high for our impotence. Retribution has been the weak souls' dream. Let it become a thing of the Past. The poverty of our nature pleads our exemption from Justice; and

to creatures such as we are, Escape and Evasion may suffice. We can hope for nothing better:—

"Fallere et effugere est Triumphus!"

Or, to quote a modern "confidence" in print,—

"I feel that I am as completely the result of my nature, and impelled to do what I do, as the needle to point to the north, or the *puppet* to move according as the string is pulled."

And again—more wooden still,—

"I cannot alter my will, or be other than what I am, and canno deserve either reward or punishment."

These sentences are published under the joint responsibility of a gentleman and lady, both advanced thinkers; and they show that Hume's labours have not been thrown away. The Master is, however, more complete. He paints a view of the broad Cosmos and the Aspects of Nature, as beheld by tutored eyes, appropriate enough for the background of a philosophy of Determinism—sufficiently appropriate, because sufficiently wrapped in shadows.

Measureless, as we have seen, is the impotence of Man. Measureless the haze of Doubt in which his objects of pursuit and his powers of pursuing are alike involved. Irremediable, also, the uncertainty whether what is truest for him is at all true for extended experience—true beyond Death—true elsewhere in the Universe. And the sphere Man inhabits has its light and shade adapted to his uncertain eyesight. The world surrounding us all, is like a succession of dioramic scenes passing over a stage on which we gaze. We have no true interest in the imagination of their reality. What promise of aught

that is Permanent can exist in a dissolving transparency? Regarding the outer world, it is to us much the same as these poor lives of ours. We are again spectators, — spectators free from praise or blame. Who can detach himself from the adamant circle drawn round his human lot? Who can fix fast the rope of sand, the moving particles as they become events outside him? The control of our environments, or of our lives, self-change and self-training, are visions no less dreamy than immortal self-duration. Of Man's waking existence the true guides are his passions, appetites, desires; his self-ease and self-interest; his love of sympathy and of applause. These guides are morally and socially safe as well as supreme,—they make and keep each man estimable; they are the builders and guardians of the State. But beyond this present waking existence we assuredly know and hope *nothing*. Nor yet have we cause to apprehend possible Futurities of any kind. In few words:—When we speak of Duty or Virtue we mean and can only mean—a rule or mode of life consentaneous with the private wishes of an individual and those of the society in which he lives. Upon these—their balance and resultant—he depends for his Moral code, its maxims and its sanctions.

Now, what has the logic of events said to these things? Are *outward* events, we ask first, ascertainably nothing more than faded impressions, ideas fallen dim? Physical Science has by its progress answered this question. The law of Natural Uniformity,—no consequent without an adequate ante-

cedent, no change without a cause of change,—is a Law as firmly written on the Physical Universe as the laws of Inertia and Gravitation. And this thorough certitude of the principle upon which all inductive knowledge rests, is one of the vast services which the study of Nature has rendered to Morals and to Religion. Here is one sure instance of a belief traversing every sphere of practical Thought, ascertained true for us, and *in itself*, by a verification wide as the known natural universe. Examine this belief, and you find that it *became* our human property through conditions under which Moral belief must in like manner become ours. Hence results a lesson, good for us all. Do not accuse your own reasonable natures of falsehood and treachery; accept their data *reasonably*, and in accordance with the laws governing those angles of vision under which they are presented to you. In few words, *trust* your own human view of the Universe. Let exceptions and allowances, such as those which observers of the heavens term "the personal equation," be taken to establish the rule. And this acceptance of a rule—this trust—is the plain *contradictory* of Hume's systematic depreciation of Man's Intelligence, his hollow banter of human Beliefs, his fixed faith in human imbecilities.

The very same law of Natural Uniformity helps us to establish the truth of that *Moral power* of Causation which Hume took such pains to explain away. This it does by force of the salient contrast between a mechanical chain of events and the varied *effects*—that is, the various *purposes*—carried out by

a Volitional Cause. The outward world is governed by fixed laws. Put an alkali and an acid together in water,—they will always act, react, and combine into a neutral. But place the same wicked pleasure within the same man's grasp at various periods of his career. He will not always clutch it. At one time he will go after it straightway,

> "As an ox goeth to the slaughter,
> Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks."

At another time he will "eschew evil, and do good, —seek peace, and ensue it." The man who thus chooses diversely preserves his Individuality; but the moral *phases* of his character are changed. He may have grown soul-sick at his own sinfulness. He may have accused himself, judged himself, condemned himself. Hence, he may have learned "to labour and to wait." Or he may have found a sudden freedom from his griefs and fears, like that haunted wretch who dwelt among tombs crying and cutting his flesh with stones. Whatever the incidents of change may be, one and the same contrast with mechanical law remains. Earth's natural substances preserve their properties, their affinities, and their chemical behaviour. The mind of Man developes itself, educates itself, is recipient of higher influences. And the transformed human being acts as he feels it right and good to act.

We have said how Hume endeavoured to represent our Nature as barred from inward change by a *fixity of character* almost as invariable as cold material

laws. To this argument we shall get occasion to recur, as it still continues the palmary argument of modern Determinism. Meantime, it seems wonderful to remember that there was a still more sweeping confutation in reserve for the philosophy which fettered Humanity fast,—so fast that Retributive Justice might seem an empty shadow, Right and Wrong the phantoms of a troubled brain.

The world has never seen a *real*—that is, a really consistent—Fatalist. What human being ever acquitted from blame the false friend who consciously and wilfully defrauded or otherwise betrayed him? In this opinion I find myself supported by Mr. Mill. That experienced observer goes with me one step *further*, in saying that many men and women are fatalists in regard of *their own* actions. Cæsar had his fortunes—Napoleon his star. Necessity inward as well as outward is often the tyrant's plea. It is not infrequently the conscience-salve of some English Pharisee, who, for a show, makes long prayers and prayerfully devours widows' houses.

By parity of reasoning it would appear probable that there never has existed a real Sceptic. An *absolute* Sceptic is of course impossible, because he would have to disbelieve his own Disbelief—he would hold it doubtful whether it be possible to doubt. It may also be true that no human creature ever so entirely divested himself of that upward tendency of his Being as to keep moral *un*certainties *perpetually* predominant. But there are, we all know, many practical Sceptics—men who seldom act upon the

dominant thought that from evil words and works evil consequences must one day ensue. Over their actions they would seem to write one universal "*pereunt*," while they blot from their consciences the final "*et imputantur*."

Neither does Scepticism require any great energy of decision in order to be extremely mischievous. If a person is so far uncertain concerning the Hereafter as to think that it deserves no sacrifice,—of him we may truly say, "he that is not with us is against us," and against his own virtue and happiness besides. Briefly, the dread of self-sacrifice, the inability to endure hardness, the wish for indulgence in some vice the heart is secretly inclined to, clothe Scepticism with its emotional allurement, and sharpen its intellectual persuasiveness. Great, therefore, the responsibility of many a modern thinker who furnishes reasonably-sounding pretences to that worst weakness, that birth-sin of Mankind!

Upon Hume, and others like Hume,—educated people of both sexes—some gay, thoughtless, glittering—others gravely, sternly earnest,—a much higher and much more awful Responsibility rested. It is bad enough to congeal the warm life of an individual Man, and poison his heart's best blood. It is infinitely worse to scoff and smile away the better thoughts of mixed and mighty multitudes. The only excuse for those scoffers comes from the hope that they knew not what they did. But is it easy to suppose that the historian of Scotland and the Stuarts could be unversed in the history of national

epidemics? Surely he, and such as he was, must have known how impalpable, yet how energetic, is the *virus* that envenoms a people. Subtle and unperceived as the germs of zymotic disease, gaining strength as they spread, and intensified by the vapoury heats of overcrowded cities,—such, and in like manner, the pestilential breath of demoralizing opinions passes over whole provinces, fevering vast multitudes as it flies. Some races appear more susceptible to its poisonous atmosphere than others; but national calamities and passions make even the calmest and most phlegmatic susceptible. Even so it had happened in Scotland; so, too, it was about to happen in France.

The free-thinking philosophers of that period were no wiser than the educated circles of ladies and gentlemen for whom they lived and wrote. We, looking back nowadays, are apt to wonder how they could so perilously sport with the world's received maxims and modes of thinking. The truth is, these people were supported by *their* world's sympathy; the mistake they made was to forget that there were in Europe—and notably in France—other worlds, with other ways of life and feeling quite outside the *exclusive* pale of their own.

Unmindful of this social fact—yet perhaps not more unmindful than the French Court, the French Church, and the French Noblesse—a clever circle, pervaded by Scepticism of every kind and degree, was bent on illuminating the French people. Inflamed with zeal for the emancipation of Mankind from evils indescribably

gross, they kindled their new Illumination where the shadows of despotism and superstition lay deepest. We may figure to ourselves a tall Lighthouse, with its lantern bright but colourless upon one side,—on the other fiery red. In the former direction, it stands like a benevolent giant overlooking heights beneath which the waters sleep in security. In the reverse direction, it flashes an ensanguined glow across sunken shoals, jagged reefs, and currents raging tempestuously. Just so, this illuminative wisdom of free thought blazed out between the two contrasted classes of the French nation: the class which enjoyed life without care, and the class which toiled serf-like and hopeless. Beheld amongst the calms of aristocratic conventionalism, what could appear better adapted to the idle, *disillusionised* men and women of that hollow and frivolous upper-world? Its quiet clearness seemed like the enlightenment of an ironical Koran, preaching *libertine freedom.* There is always an incessant craving for strong sensations when life appears short and tedious, and when the ghastly skull cannot be wholly hidden by rosebuds garlanded before they be withered. To such hearts and heads, Easy Philosophy brings certain alleviations; its tranquil brilliancy, though cold and pale, is soothing. Its promise seems to be security in wicked pleasure,—under all circumstances —Security.

But, what was the other side of the Lantern like? It gleamed blood-red and fiery over the sons and daughters of civilized servitude,—the part-educated,

half-famished, whole-desperate dwellers in the dark places of society. They, too, craved strong sensations. Concerning such, we may take up our parable and say,—"Over them was spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them: but yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness."* Unto themselves first; next to their cynical Lords and Ladies; to the French race; and to all Europe! Of any pure and spiritual teaching, they would have asked, "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?" To the misery-maddened no light was or could be so welcome, as that lurid blaze of unbelieving philosophy, which burned away their fears of a future Retribution, and *by consequence* set their passions and their vengeance free.

Had there existed prophetic insight among the reasoners of polished France, the visible fact that their Philosophy shone out over such terrific shadows, would have been a danger-signal of the coming wreck. But no warning voice was heard, till the flame of atheistic selfishness was *answered* by the furnace-fires of that Terror which consumed all human ties. Do *we*, in these days, wonder that no warning was heeded *then?* Would any similar warning be more effectual *now?* Fatalism and Atheism are preached constantly amidst the plaudits of ignorant Englishmen. How many highly-bred politicians deem the matter a thing of the slightest consequence?

Hume would never have set cities on fire, beheaded

* *Wisdom of Solomon*, xvii. 21.

or hacked to pieces human beings,—least of all the refined, the noble, the educated. But he must be reckoned among those who sneeringly scattered smouldering embers, and *bequeathed* to others death by the inevitable conflagration.

Think,—for a single moment picture to yourselves, —what it was to run the gauntlet through a mob of murder-wearied, more than half intoxicated, man and woman slayers.

See, here is a Cup! It is red outside and within, —deep, ensanguined, red. Well may it be so!—it is held by blood-stained hands; it is filled from aristocratic veins. Drink, you that desire to live, was the cry,—drink, and live you may. The fame of one nobly-born maiden * is immortal,—she did drink that her Father might continue in life. For a brief half-hour father and daughter, aged man and stout-hearted girl, were the idols of those who worshipped Unreason, Fate, and Fury. No lack of such worshippers in those days: renegade noblesse; priests that blasphemed; lawyers who enacted decrees of blood and fire; orators for ever sharpening the citizens' passions and their poniards.

Madness everywhere!—the ringing tocsin—the rumble of the death-cart—the heavy knife that descended every second minute; whilst no open mourners dared to go about the streets.

Seldom has the Logic of Events been more complete. For this was the Beacon-blaze of the great French Illumination!

* Mademoiselle de Sombreuil.

LECTURE IV.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

LECTURE IV.

PSALM lxii. 11, 12.

"GOD HATH SPOKEN ONCE;
TWICE HAVE I HEARD THIS;
THAT POWER BELONGETH UNTO GOD.
ALSO UNTO THEE, O LORD, BELONGETH MERCY:
FOR THOU RENDEREST TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORK."

THE Psalmist here expresses one of the most transcendent convictions entertained at any time by any human Soul. It realizes for us the existence of a supreme Sovereign, Who is also a redresser of Wrongs and a rewarder of Righteous dealing. Who does yet more: He has regard to the duties and devotions which leave those that render them unprofitable servants. But He, of the plenitude of His mercy, requites them with good measure, running over, given into their bosoms.

To the essential ideas conveyed, the form of words into which they are thrown is of small consequence. But it so happens that our Lord adopts the outward shaping bestowed on his thought by the Psalmist. "The Son of Man," He says, "shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

One great beauty of this saying consists in its exquisite transparency of expression. It recognises,

with unmistakeable emphasis, three grand ideas. First, The Reality of Moral Distinctions. Next, Their coming affirmation and their empire over us, who (whether we like it or no) are heirs to vast Futurities. Thirdly, The certainty, equity, and clearness of the Criterion employed in separating between man and his fellow-man.

This whole series of principles moulded into facts, and destined to absolute completion, is represented as a future consummation of the present discipline and development of our race. When the world we inhabit put on long ago its glorious apparel, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. When the Race which now inhabits this world grows ripe for its more developed phase, the Sovereign of Mankind is portrayed in shining state, attended by His holy angels. He appears creator-like, in His inauguration of a new and noble existence, reserved for the spirits of just men made perfect. Those righteous souls, who have thus reached the required stature of their growth, are to possess a world which cannot be shaken. Their trials, and the weary, tearful times of their pilgrimage, are over. The clouds are rolled away from their upward vision. Faith has yielded place to sight. Now, therefore, their patient endurance obtains its crown. Accounted not only faithful, but sure and steadfast, they receive a kingdom which cannot be moved.

The natural lesson follows,—that we who have not yet attained, should serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. For Retributive Justice

is more than one-sided. "Our God is a consuming Fire."

The point here remarkable to us, is that every one of the three ideas contained in our text, and in the parallel sayings of our Lord, is found among the principles of Natural Religion. Add that the basis of Moral truth (which underlies Natural Religion) cannot but be as distinctly *two*-sided as the scriptural doctrine of Retribution. Every moral "ought to do" is always attended by an "ought not to be done." And if happiness be allotted to a fulfilment of the "Ought," then, *pari passu*, a loss of happiness will attend upon the perpetrated "ought not." The Law of Retribution, in order to be Ethical, must follow (equitably as well as naturally) upon *both* right and wrong doing. Both ways, it must find its issue in a just recompense of reward.

That outcome of Morality which is commonly called Retributive Justice, has occupied some of our attention. We saw that, as a matter of fact, the sense of Responsibility asserts and re-asserts itself under the most varied phases of our environment. Under diversities of social life, for example, as wide apart as old Jerusalem and modern Königsberg. Under diversified modes of thought and feeling, such as ruled the beginnings of our Race, and such as in our hard nineteenth century, still lead to self-control and self-sacrifice. There are no two beliefs so thoroughly Anglo-Saxon as those embodied in the "I ought" and the "I am accountable."

With these two sturdy beliefs is connected our

sense of shame. The man who complies with some baseness, either to save himself from pain or to acquire new means of enjoyment, cannot be made to feel himself anything better than a dastard. And this is true of most men—from an Indian Chief to a traitorous mob-courtier, or even a renegade Churchman. He who *conquers* through suffering, is ennobled both in his own eyes and in the estimation of his fellows. This, again, is pre-eminently true of all Christian and Anglican martyrs. It is true of Regulus; it is true also of Howard, the philanthropist.

At the close of the last, and beginning of the present century, the main questions relating to Duty, Responsibility, Moral law, Moral distinctions, and their issues, put on (as we have already seen) a lifelike aspect. They were cast into this attractive mould by the ironical philosophy of Hume, and the earnest antagonism of Kant. If we remember that the former was born in 1711, and died in 1776; the latter, born in 1724, lived on till 1804,—we shall see the significance of this antithesis. A very ready and certain method for any one to convince himself of its importance, is to translate the philosophical language of that day into the modern scientific terminology which veils its metamorphosis. We see then how complete is the pedigree of Thought.

The question of questions, under which all other issues are naturally ranged, and from which they derive their special interest, may be stated in these words: How far is Man merely a Spectator,—how

far a real Agent in the affairs of his existence? The scope of this question is rendered apparent by observing the conditions requisite for answering it. The balance between looking on at our tragedy or comedy of Life, and exerting a causal energy upon its scenes and events, can only be decided by our estimate of human knowledge and human Will-power. The Sceptic always prefers to state the terms of this estimate in a destructive form, and to ask (as Hume was never weary of asking) how vast is Man's ignorance,—how vast is Man's impotence? He will often like to add (as Hume added), that the evidence of these imbecilities is for ever meeting us on every side.

In my last Lecture I quoted some of Hume's most favoured evidence. From a *metaphysical* point of view, he pronounced Man's knowledge as resting upon no first-grounds of certitude. From a *social* point of view, human actions were held resolvable into motives, always the reverse of sublime, often little better than bestial; and dependent on a typical character which can yield small hope of change, —still less of self-education. That our character is thus formed *for* us, even now remains (according to Mr. Mill) the strongest argument of modern Fatalism. There does exist a rejoinder, but it turns on a principle not mentioned either by Hume or his nineteenth century disciples.

In all that belongs to Life, we must on each occasion await the next swing of the pendulum. The license of one age gives place to the austerities

of another: the court promotes the convent, and the convent falls before temptations common to man, and so the circle is again complete. The doubts of Hume awakened the criticism of Kant. A theory of life, ignoble at the best, was belied by a noble life; and this nobility was in turn the honest outcome of a philosophy, to which we all look back as era-making, in the same sense that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were era-making. We feel, as well as know, this to be true in the case of the great German, no less than in the case of the great Greeks. True, also, in the same way, and for a precisely similar reason. These four thinkers went to Man's Nature for starting-points of Truth; plastic Laws under which we all see, understand, believe, hope, and learn to live an intellectual and moral life, at first and at all times. The practical teaching of the four, otherwise different, met in one distinctly human position.

This conclusion is, in point of fact, the inevitable result to which thorough Scepticism itself works round. And that all Scepticism, if *fairly* stated and reasoned, must at last become thorough, is plain; because unless Scepticism succeeds in demolishing the validity of Thought, it ceases to be Scepticism. What, then, is the process of demolition? Answer this question, and you will see that by virtue of its own Method Scepticism is shown to be an Unreality. It can only destroy the validity of Thought by assuming that the laws of Thought are valid; it must use Reason to disprove the truth of Reason. But if Thought be invalid, and Reason no safe source

of truth, it necessarily follows that the thinking and reasoning by which the Sceptic reaches his conclusion must have been from the first invalid and unsafe. The whole sceptical argument, therefore, *was* and *is* an illusion,—and Truth lies in a precisely opposite direction.

This, always, is the logical *felò de se* committed by argumentative Doubt. Hence Kant's criticism may be viewed as a protest against reasoned-out *suicide;* a life-preserver amidst the philosophical shipwreck. All our own every-day existence is a similar protest, and becomes (by parity of reasoning) a verification of that antagonistic system of Thought which asserts some ultimate Truth-power in Man. Hume (as we have already seen) did himself, in his common-sense hours, feel his own conclusions, or rather his endless want of conclusion, as a sufficient evidence to prove his arguments hollow. In this feeling he was consistent with his utilitarian maxims. A man to be useful must act with earnestness. But no man will act earnestly without earnest convictions. The issue of thorough doubt ought to be a waveless slumber of the soul—a hesitating, or at least an expectant, Quietism.

Kant's protest was perfectly natural. The serious Teutonic spirit can never rest content with trifling away serious existence. It is point-blank opposed to that wretchedly frivolous spirit which feels satisfied with depreciating or denying the great aims of Humanity. In its nobler view, Man is in this world sovereign over all that is merely sensitive. He shed

a glory over Nature from the light of his own Being. Outside impressions,—the shifting circumstantials of Man's environment,—rush inwards through the open avenues of his bodily senses. They come like shadows, but can never so depart. They enter in—a long procession, an ever-passing train of individual objectivities. Once entered, they receive order, clearness, harmony, significance, from the sovereign laws of human thought. That which was a disconnected event, and *in itself* transitory, is converted into the link of a chain. That which was figured as fluent, vanishing, a fragment of the Manifold and Mutable, becomes fixed, and conditioned upon the Universal and the Absolute.

Look, for example, at the physical sphere. By this same universal "must be," we gain access to the mechanism of the Heavens. We are enabled to explain the phases of our world's satellite, and the translation of our world in space. We distinguish the movements of our planetary system, in relation to ourselves, and also to the starry barriers of the sky. With the elder Herschel, we break through those remote barriers, and gaze backwards upon the realm left behind us—from a far-away distance, real and evident to the Mathematician, but overpowering the wildest imagination. So simply a matter of fact is this, that we are obliged to *accept* the absolutely inconceivable. Truth becomes stranger than fiction; plain prose outsoars the most sublime glancing of the poet's eye. Our own world, our own system, appears, to scientific sight, a part of that double-

belted galaxy, which the vision of our body and of our fancy looks upon as traversing the distant Universe. And through those immeasurable regions far beyond, there float, balanced in clear azure, suns, systems—formed and unformed—amidst a Space stretched out into infinitude; and sown with worlds like grains of rice thrown broadcast over the wide-spread waters of Orissa.

Strange, too, is it not? how we—Hume's imbecile fellow-creatures—should have found means to ascertain that the elementary components of orbs and systems of orbs, glittering in the limitless Sky-ocean, are identical with the useful elements found in this world,—with substances which enter into the composition of our earth, our bodies, our food, our clothing, our arts, arms, and hearths!* Nay, more than this. From Nature's uniformity it follows that the thing which hath been, must be. We read a Nebula into a Sun with revolving globes around him. We watch

* We know even the sidereal distribution of substances which we have been accustomed to call our own:—

"It is a curious circumstance that some of the whiter stars, such as Sirius, do not appear to contain anything but hydrogen; at least we have no indication that they do; other stars again of less whiteness, in addition to hydrogen, have such substances as iron, sodium, etc.; while yellow, orange, and blood-red stars, and variable stars, appear to contain in their atmospheres substances which are compounds."—*The Unseen Universe*, Sect. 159. [The brighter stars of the Sirius class shew indications of sodium, iron, and magnesium. The absorptive strata appear to be thick and under great pressure, as well as of a very high temperature. Compare Schellen's *Spectrum Analysis*, Part III., Sect. 62.]

The composition of *un*resolved Nebulæ will occur for mention in my sixth Lecture.

the Comet as it flies away, and foretell its return. We know when the eclipse, or the transit, must come to pass. We register their phenomena, and verify our own verities. And when we have done all this, we can properly understand why a stone thrown upwards must fall down. We have demonstrated what we knew *prior* to our cosmical experience,—the truths of number, measure, and magnitude. We acknowledge them as true *for us*, and true for the whole *material Universe.*

Were this all, Man could scarcely be spoken of as branded by Nature with *extreme* ignorance. But this is not all. The great Greek Moralist questioned mathematical first-principles out of the mouth and mind of a slave. So, too, from a raw English lad may be questioned out the axiom which underlies demonstration, and enables us to convert rough ore into sterling thought, without fearing that the logic of events will confute us. This axiom is the surest of all principles—*the principle of contradiction.* Knowing that if our inward vision is true—and cannot but be true—this principle is also a certain logical truth, we proceed to infer, and to employ our inferences as premises for further stages of inferring—chain after chain, conclusion upon conclusion—till we reach some new world of knowledge; vast, it may be, as the gain of a second hemisphere. Neither do we feel apprehensive lest our science should be found an oblique shadow, or our Reason a meteor spark. And surely it is better for us that we should know and acknowledge these facts, since

they are knowable, and given us to know: better far than to conclude, with David Hume, "that we have no choice left but betwixt a false Reason or none at all."

An affirmative philosophy stands opposed to the negations and blanks of Scepticism, not only in its conclusions, but also in its discovery of binding laws. And it is, in its highest nature, *synthetic*. In this view, the *de*structive analysis, which forms the approved method of Sceptics, appears nothing better than an attempt to reduce valuable substances into worthless elements. The mere statement of this result stamps Scepticism as suicidal in respect of Utility, just as we have seen it suicidal in respect of Validity. That is to say,—As its procedure *invalidates* itself, *so* its results are simply *useless!* And the corollary seems obvious: Scepticism cannot, in strictness of speech, be termed a Philosophy; much less a Philosophy which *satisfies* the requirements of Human Nature.

What, then, is the contrasted amount of satisfaction to be gained from an opposite Method? Suppose you contemplate a Geometrical diagram, you will perceive that one or more principles are made evident by the truth of its construction; and these, when stated, you recognise as axiomatic. In other words, you perceive a theoretically certain "*must be*," prior to all actual experience, and often whole centuries of time in advance of it. Now, one use of verification when it does accrue (as in this case it has accrued from the measurement of Earth and Heavens), is to

verify, first, the *principles* themselves; next, the truth of *that kind of insight* which discovered those axioms and affirmed them. And the possession of such insights is an endowment characteristic of Man.

The Mathematical insight, which is our common property, having been found safe, there arises a presumption in favour of the validity of our *other* axiomatic insights, provided they possess a history sufficiently resembling the history of the insight already verified. For instance;—There arises a presumption in favour of the axiom on which Logic rests over and above its own inherent certitude. We all perceive its truth. We are unable to deny it. We cannot help denying its contradictory. Thus the history of the logical axiom runs parallel with the history of Mathematical axioms.

This same point of presumptive evidence *à priori* gives rise to some further notable consideration. Any axiom is, we suppose, a truth shining by its own light. So let it be; yet *each* valid example of axiomatic truth adds strength and illumination to another. Consequently, the evidence becomes *accumulative;* or, if you please, *verificatory.* Taking the two instances just adduced, the whole effect on the mind may be stated as follows. Just as Mathematical axioms are accepted *prior* to all application, so the grand principle of Logic claims to be accepted prior to its employment. And after this *first* claim is put in, a kind of *confirmatory* claim appears reasonable, *anterior* to any question of *fact*-verifica-

tion, because the *à-priori* conviction in this second instance is *not without* precedent. One set of verified axioms—to wit, the Mathematical—must cause us to *expect* the truth of another axiom—that is to say, the Logical; and we feel this probability would be *just* were *no* other kind of verification feasible or forthcoming. It is true, indeed, that we *are* able to find a subsequent and final satisfaction from the coincidence of fact or experiment, with, *first*, our primary conviction, and, *next*, our probable expectation, which was superadded from analogy and precedent. But suppose no fact-verifying process had ever been possible, we might still have kept a *sufficient* confidence in our certitude already acquired. Suppose, on the contrary, that it has been not only possible but actual—as is really the case—we must needs feel a *fresh* certitude, sufficing in itself, sufficing also because closely connected with our own previous experience.

Another extremely instructive point is, that our acceptance of the Logical ground-principle *per se* appears far from being brought home to us in the *same* manner as our acceptance of the axioms of Geometry. There is, in their case, an outward form or *schema*,—an appeal to sensuous perception as well as to Reason. The principle of Contradiction, on the other hand, is suggested as well as assured to us by a purely abstract process. Its very entrance into the mind comes to pass through a medium, "from outward sense refined and clear." Poetry is, we know, a more simply ideal art than painting or music,

because it is clothed in a vestment, woven by the human mind, instead of addressing us under the guise of a sensuous presentation impressed upon the animal eye. So, too, the foundation-principle underlying all inference robes itself in our human travelling attire of Thought,—which is (we may say without being poets) a plumage alive with winged words. And those vitalized pinions are given to no creature below the race of reasoning, and, *therefore*, articulately-speaking men.

It happens, however, that the whole of our Life is perpetually adding material confirmation strong to the formal certitude claimed by this ground-principle of direct demonstration. Here, again, as in the example of Geometry, a never-ending process of verification cannot fail to repeat the lesson, "Trust your own Intuitions."

I must now conduct you to the spectacle of a more recondite kind of Trust. A trust, as absolute in its way, as our assurance of mathematical or logical First-grounds. Yet it occupies a different position in the science of mind, and opens out to our view a different territory of human insight. Amongst all the wonderful procedures of Man's thought, none seems so marvellous, as regards either its origin, its realization, or its results, as the process of Induction. Its work has been going on since Man first tenanted the world. It surrounds us, from the cradle to the grave, with a mental atmosphere in which our whole Race works and marches onwards continually. Yet no subject of psychological investigation has been

so tardy in attaining ripeness. None so slow to lay bare the secret of its energy to the philosophic eye.

Compare Hume, Kant, and Hegel. Upon *one* topic you will find an accordance. Nor will any deep thinker henceforward hesitate to affirm that the *universality* of the Inductive principle, (the sole characteristic which makes its value inestimable,) is *given* by the Mind of Man alone. It compels our assent before experience; no alleged experience can ever be weighed in the scale against it. Neither could any supposable mass of favourable experience, heaped up mountains high, reach the *absolute* elevation to which it rises,—nor yet, if ever so broadly expanded, attain the completeness of its rule over the whole material universe. Human experience may, in a sense, be said to verify its truth. But such verification appears, when examined, to yield not an enlarging, but a limiting and defining effect —a greater precision and exactness of application. And, so far as this limitary effect is concerned, it stands in diametrical contrast with the verifications of applied Geometry.

The whole subject of Induction is (as I have said) surrounded by unsolved and half-solved questions. You will have observed that the practice of Aristotle varies. Sometimes, when he uses Induction, he enumerates instances; sometimes he boldly lays his hand upon one single typical example, and by its appositeness leads up his auditor's mind to grasp a whole idea. Bacon's scheme of Induction must strike every reader who understands him as truly gigantic.

By the unintelligent it is voted thoroughly Utopian. Modern Science has, however, culled from it a method of interrogating Nature by crucial questions, answering the same by crucial experiments; and subjecting hypotheses thus gained to successive verifications. Sir Isaac Newton's breadth of sweep, gained by his poring over a wide cycle of facts till the light of some verifiable theory dawned upon his intellect, may seem, in some eyes, a nearer approach to the Baconian scheme than the practice adopted by later philosophers. How this light of theory arises, we cannot tell; but it does in fact arise. So writes Dr. Tyndall, who looks upon its law as a possession assigned to Genius, and likens it to a kind of Inspiration.* Or, to use another of his similitudes, the process may be compared with the clearing of a mirror, or photographic plate. The mind, thus brought into an unclouded state, receives a lucid image. And such a final image is the result sought by the philosopher's Induction.

This account of the Inductive process may appear to several here much more complicated—more delicate in adaptation, and bearing, on the face of it, less warranty of certitude than they have been accustomed to imagine. Yet, as you all know, the certitude becomes, in effect, absolute. The truth is, that what seems broad and simple enough in general outline, must often be extremely refined and tentative amongst the lights and shades of specialized definition. And the nobler the science,

* *Fragments of Science*, pp. 57, 58, 60.

the more likely this contrast to ensue. *Primâ-facie* theories are always facile in appearance. The *functional* application of them is immensely difficult. So, too, Doubt and Denial are easy. The difficulty lies with Proofs and Affirmatives. Most of you may remember the old and true adage, "Unus asinus plus negabit in unâ horâ quàm centum philosophi in centum annis probaverint."

I must venture on showing you two further characteristics of the great Inductive Law; *both* equally remote from the conceptions commonly formed of it. As regards the *first*, one of the most subtle among our own metaphysical Theologians is not unsupported by the most Utilitarian of Professors belonging to another University. And, indeed, the truth of the case is plain, when once distinctly stated. Our primary belief in the Uniformity of Nature, our earliest assurance—"that the thing which hath been shall be,"—springs from an impulse to believe, *prior* not only to reasoning on the subject, but also to every kind of empirical justification. For years, we all accept and act upon a maxim which not one in a hundred amongst us is able, in after life, approximately to explain. No rhetorical power on earth would argue us out of our belief in Nature's Uniformity. Yet, very few of us reflect that both its *kind* of certitude, and the *connateness* of its origin with our human consciousness, manifest a very near approach to the characters of our natural beliefs in Moral Distinctions and in God. *So* connate with

the beginnings of our life, does this last-named Theistic belief appear to Mr. Hume, *so* deeply inwoven with the earliest fibres of our being, that he classes Theism amongst the instincts or peculiar attributes of Humanity. His words are:—

"The universal propensity to believe in invisible, intelligent power, if not an original instinct, being at least a general attendant of human nature, may be considered as a kind of mark or stamp, which the Divine workman has set upon his work; and nothing surely can more dignify mankind, than to be thus selected from all other parts of the creation, and to bear the image or impression of the universal Creator." *

Whether this and other similar beliefs are properly termed *instinctive* or not, no way concerns our present investigation. Our business lies with the actual character,—not the origin of our primary belief in Retribution, together with its moral correlatives. Yet, if we do find cause to view such beliefs in the light of Instincts, we ought carefully to add that they are instincts appertaining to a nature endowed with *Reason.* Life, as we see it in vegetables or Infusoria, becomes altered by the introduction of a nervous system, and appears still more changed when subjected to the dominion of nervous centres. Precisely so, Instinct may undergo most *real* alteration, simultaneously with the very first dawn of Reason. It may *afterwards* become metamorphosed, and be translated into a new and glorious shape, as Reason arrives at its sovereignty over the perfected human creature. This hypothesis would explain much that is dark respecting the paths by

* *Natural History of Religion*, Sect. xv. (G. & G. iv. 362.)

which automatism inosculates with the spontaneous movements of our human Will-power. It may explain much respecting the empire of Habit over our lower nature; and the manner in which our higher Self uses fresh Habituations, to conquer and control inferior impulses and desires,—that is, to change our own *character*, and by such change to acquire new aims, new motives, new volitions. The whole subject deserves a long and careful consideration, and is sure to repay the toils of some nineteenth century philosopher.

In whatever way the question of Rise and Progress be argued, we must now leave it in the shadows. It has been fertile in hypotheses which range from innate Ideas, the doctrine of *Anamnesis*, and a faith in former worlds of spiritual life, down to the modern theory of derivation by heredity—that is to say, the inherited and assimilated experience of numberless generations. But Natural Religion deals with the observed and observable *facts* of our existing Moral Nature, and does not concern itself with speculations founded on an embryology. And this course must appear to be a dictate of right reason. Just as the embryonic brain is not identical, in form or function, with the brain of a Kant or an Aristotle—(although pre-supposed and involved as a foregone condition)—exactly so, let the exercise of our practical Reason be conditioned as it may, there is *no* necessary identity of operation between its present insights and its formative, and part-formed, uses, throughout periods long passed away.

With this protest, never to be forgotten by any Moralist, I pass to the *second* remarkable characteristic of Inductive Law which I proposed elucidating. We saw how pure were those abstractions upon which rest the mathematical sciences, as well as the science of all Reasoning. Should any one feel at all doubtful respecting the essential *abstractedness* of Geometrical axioms, let him consider that Francis Bacon assigned Mathematics to the province of *Metaphysic*, by reason of this very character. As regards their entrance into the mind, we have already observed a difference between them and the primary axiom of Logic. Notwithstanding this, we must agree with Bacon, that they are, of all *Forms*, the most abstract and separated from Matter.

But what a salient contrast do they present to the ground-principle of Induction! This principle cannot be called a *formal* first-truth. It is from its very beginning *concrete;* bound up (so to speak) with our material existence, and the facts of our material environment. Our Reason does not look forth upon a visible *schema*, or diagram, displaying some self-evident truth to the inward eye. Much less does Reason represent to itself an *ideally*-conceived principle. What Reason sees, is a *fact* or an *event;* and from the present infers the future,—from the particular asserts a knowledge of the universal. I have dwelt on this phenomenon elsewhere,* and cannot repeat myself, but may just mention the circumstance, that these and similar insights controlling

* *Philosophy of Natural Theology*, p. 256 seq.

our practical life (moral and æsthetic), our relations to the outside world and our knowledge of its forces, ought all to be included under one collective designation. I have therefore ventured to bestow upon the whole genus one common name, and have called them Beliefs of Reason. The first word, "Beliefs," is not inappropriate to the reliance they, from the first, inspire; and it has the merit of not saying too much. The addition "of Reason" limits such instincts (*if* we may so term them) to the sole Rational inhabitants of this world. Reason in itself thus finally appears to us, who are endowed with its living essence, as the exact opposite to any imaginable *accretion* of sensuous elements, or any bundle of *heterogeneous* properties. A mode of existence, illustrative of what it is *unlike*, may be found in those composite animals whose blossoming lives resemble flower-clusters grown together. Reason sits, so to speak, at the centre of our world,—a world exhibiting before the eye of Reason its several zones of pure Thought, mixed Truth, and operative Belief. Throughout all these zones Reason looks with equal eye: when we speak, therefore, of Man's practical Reason, the phrase is *not* meant to differentiate an Entity, one and indivisible. But, just as we mentally distinguish the hollow and the swell of a curve, even though the curve be a mathematical, not a tangible line, so (to borrow a simile from Aristotle) we may, with like propriety, distinguish the differing activities of Reason. The Diverseness we speak of is not in the Principle, but in its operation. It springs not

from any modification of the working essence, but is *given* by the sphere in which Reason works.

The Law which our Reason enunciates for the sphere of *natural* events—the Inductive Law of Science—may be expressed by various forms of speech, negative as well as affirmative; yet each and all assert the same universal "*must be.*" We may say, "There is no change without a cause of change;" or, "Every consequent must have its antecedent,—each antecedent its invariable consequent." Either way, we mean to express our firm belief in the Uniformity of Nature, just as was meant, in days of old, by that short but emphatic maxim, "The thing which hath been, shall be."

Precisely in the same manner, we both say and believe that, throughout the Moral zone, even as throughout the physical zone of the world, a Law embodying an immutable "*must be*" is, to the eye of our Reason, universal. The different operation of the Must (a fact which we also perceive and assert), is consequent upon the difference of subject-matter controlled by the Supreme formal Law. In the sphere of physics, where Things as they exist can neither originate nor terminate Motion, the Law is necessarily mechanical. In the sphere of Volition, Persons not Things are the subjects of Law. They are able to commence actions, and to hinder them. The necessity, therefore, becomes Moral,—the "Must be" is transformed into an "*ought to do.*" However people may argue or refine on such topics, this again is a persuasion which no arguments can eradicate

from the human mind: "I *know* I ought *not* to have done it" will always be the utterance of multitudes whose sin has found them out. "*You ought not*" is the phrase of a Father to an erring child. Husbands, wives, friends, neighbours, all urge the same plea. The "you ought," or "I ought," stands through our whole lives absolutely imperative. "There is a nobility of aim open in some way to every man. You *ought* to embrace it" is practically said to every youth, by every tutor, every professor, every Head of a House in Oxford. It drops from the lips of our golden-mouthed preachers; it beams out from the example of many a self-controlled, self-denying votary of Religion. "These things bring a man peace at the last," is the consensus of all your guides and all your exemplars. And consider how often, when all seemed against it, before the eyes of all Oxford men, the "*I ought*" has been victoriously maintained. Here, for example, in this very church, within these four walls, Anglican prelates, lawfully anointed, were brought to bay by their persecutors and required to affirm a Falsehood. Although the penalties were loss of earthly substance and position, imprisonment, cruel mockings, and death by fire, the "I ought" prevailed. It prevailed here; it prevailed in sight of the old grey walls of Balliol, and the Saxon tower of St. Michael's. There the sacrifice of Duty was consummated. There one Bishop said to his companion in torture, "Be of good comfort and play the Man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be

put out." These words *still* stand true. True for England,—true for Oxford! We Oxonians have often been censured for clinging too fondly to the records and customs of the Past; and false prophets were not wanting, more than two centuries ago, who foretold the approaching Romanism of our whole University. Yet what was the answer pronounced at Magdalen, and repeated through Oxford, when James the Second tried that question out? And if the question were tried again, what would be our answer *now?* There are in this church, men who, like myself, have reason to mourn the loss of friends remaining in the same land, but no longer walking to the same House of God. Yet, for many here, as for me, the "*I ought*" remains the same. That old Bishop's words are not dead, but living. We would rather ourselves die in the slow-consuming flame, than yield allegiance to the proud false Dogma which has torn by its perplexities the breasts of some among our lost friends, and of others our fellow-countrymen. We would resist, not only in theory, but also in practice, the Schism-causing pretensions of Papal Rome. So long as the power of Resistance shall remain to us, and to leaders of men like-minded with our humbler selves, the resolve (long ago spoken) will be echoed, and re-echoed,—

"That no Italian Priest
Shall tithe or toll in these dominions."

In saying this, we may all wish to say likewise,—

"Great is Truth, and mighty above all things."*

* 1 Esdras iv. 41.

The "ought," which is *ours* now, will one day become the final "Must be" of the Universe. No real martyr for conscience' sake has ever failed to place trust in this principle. The Patriarch, when forsaken of mankind, and reasoning over the battle-cries of Right and Wrong, said, "I *know* that my Redeemer liveth." * Socrates looked for undying friends, powerful, eternal, immutable, when he swallowed the juice, and felt his limbs grow cold. The Mother and her seven sons, in Maccabee times, offered their bodies and lives for the laws of their Fathers, believing that the King of the World should raise them up, who died for His laws, unto everlasting life.†

The last instance brings with it another reflection. What we have already said, results from the insight of Reason, directed to the *practical*, that is the Moral, Truth-zone of our earthly existence. But add to this the conclusion of Natural Theology—the Belief in a righteous God. We rise to our knowledge of Him through His attributes; some visible, some dimly seen. From them, inscribed on Nature, and on our own Nature, we revere Him as our true Cause, our Law-giver, and our Judge. We are, at once, *sure* that the sighing of the prisoner shall come before Him; that He will not be forgetful of them that are appointed to die. And it is God alone Who can finally take away the veil that is spread over all nations, and ransom them from the power of the grave. To the man who believes in God, and realizes

* Job xix. 25. † 2 Maccabees vii. 9.

God's presence, the simple "ought to *do*" is irradiated with a new clearness; it seems to pervade the soul through higher avenues of sense. He feels himself impelled by a desire to please his Lord,—he cherishes in his heart a sentiment of loyalty, devotion, and love. And a human being, thus strengthened and renovated, becomes as it were a Law unto himself.

It cannot be that *every* heart of man has been visited by emotions so sublime, by affections so happy and so vivifying. Neither, again, can we expect all human minds to be *equally* clear-sighted in regard of the "ought, and ought not to do." We are, early or late, made aware that the fact is contrariwise. In looking at Life, we must begin by placing on one side many cases of stark moral insensibility; which can only be paralleled, in the physical sphere, by such phenomena as colour-blindness, complete absence of musical ear, and other congenital imperfections. The intellectual world presents much closer parallels. Incapacity for apprehending the most obvious common-sense propositions has clouded the existence of many a son of Genius. Inability to learn Geometry is not an uncommon thing; indeed, if geometrical power were more generally possessed, there would be a great diminution of inconsequential reasoning. I myself knew a gentleman who had amassed a large fortune in business, and occupied the station of a county magistrate, yet was altogether unequal to abstract thought. And so far did this inability extend, that he could not perceive the truth of several amongst Euclid's axioms. The effect on his judicial

functions was notable: they were performed with the most indiscriminating austerity.

Putting aside such instances as these, an equal power of apprehending moral truth must never be expected amongst men. Yet, at first sight, we may feel surprised by the greatness of its inequality. Suppose the phase of this world now passing before our eyes could be taken to represent the whole history of Mankind,—*then* the admitted antagonism between Moral first-principles and the insusceptible state of full many an inward eye, might appear hopelessly enigmatic. But, in numberless instances, we discern—in more we infer—a strong and sufficient *why*. To go no farther than our own country, one cause lies heavy as an incubus upon the hearts of those who are conversant with vast cities, and the birthplaces and wild-beast dens for youth and age contained in them. The heroism, sometimes the Quixotism, of home-missionaries, both male and female, bears perpetual witness to this mournful reality. And, when we pass from the annals of the Poor into an atmosphere of what is called Respectability, no one can help observing causes enough, and more than enough, for the spread and heredity of moral short-sightedness. We hear maxims, against which the better nature of the speaker must revolt. We see examples sometimes carelessly wicked, sometimes ingrained upon men's lives by a long course of Indifferentism, and by the habit of asking "What is Truth?" without any serious search for a reply. And we know that, just as moral epidemics pervade certain eras of

history, (we in England need go no farther back than Charles the Second's day,) so, too, Man's individual proclivities to self-indulgent vice must at all times be frightfully contagious. Selfishness and sensuality are now, as always, like the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday. In our present imperfect state, Retribution most frequently takes the form of sin punishing sin. Often a man's or woman's whole existence is wrong and wretched, themselves being judges. Sometimes the children judge their fathers and mothers; more commonly they imitate their wicked example. And this, as we have observed, is at once a statute of Retribution written in the Old Testament, and a law of Heredity asserted and explained by the foremost of modern Biologists.

These facts considered, we might imagine that, in the lapse of ages, Morality must become extinct. But it is undying,—more tenacious of vitality than grains of wheat unwrapped from Egyptian catacombs, which even now produce their hundredfold in Devonshire cornfields. Men, in their thoughts, accuse one another; very often they accuse themselves; often there is a contest as well as a self-accusation. "That which I do I allow not: for what I would, that, do I not; but what I hate, that do I." * "There is another man within me, that's angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me." †

Often the self-accuser proceeds to absolute self-condemnation:—

* Romans vii. 15. † *Religio Medici*, Part II., sect. vii.

"O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!—
The lights burn blue.—It is now dead midnight
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.

. . . . . .

I am a villain: Yet I lie, I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well:—fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.

. . . . . .

I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;
And if I die, no soul shall pity me:
Nay, wherefore should they,—since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself?"

Such as King Richard's, is the passionate remorse of any unscrupulous man of the world,—a man of impulse and action; firm in resolve, weak only to be again firm and wicked. But there are natures deliberate in sin, although remorseful; hearts which are self-broken, yet brokenly live on. Before their eyes is a horror of great darkness; a dreadful sound is in their ears; within their souls an overpowering sense of ever-present inability. No light: much pain: and hope itself departed. Small strength to wish, and none to work a change:—

"It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
And shudder, as the reptiles creep
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay!"*

So wrote one who had felt what he described, and

* *The Giaour.*

who rushed upon its terrors, *œstrus-driven* into strong and wild sensations. They were strong,—and he told them to the world in immortal verse. The world admired the lurid glow of his genius: but that power soon passed from us; it was quenched, like a lamp which could not be replenished; and even so went out into darkness.

Great examples are great teachings. In them we see the typical lineaments of Man. When a painter or sculptor shapes out our human form, he seeks it in its finest physical mould, either for stern strength or for elevated beauty. The typical Soul is strong in its Humanity. And the truly human Soul, neither perverse nor depraved into something bestial, may be likened to a piece of Imperial tribute-money well coined and undefaced. Such a Soul bears, in its sorrow as in its hope, a persistent Image and Superscription of its supra-natural Life. In this way, Strength continues to possess a kind of Beauty, truest in its excellence when Strength has been true to its purpose. In this way, likewise, we perceive that the True is pre-eminently the Beautiful.

Great examples are more than great teachings; for what they teach is always some typical lesson, prepared, and worked into human shape. They impress the mind as realities concrete and salient,—the very opposite of attenuated theories! It is worth a thousand theories, to know the *hard* fact that Remorse is a solitude; that there does actually come upon bad men such a fate as Moral desolation. And, when

we come to great lives, and the life-work of great thinkers, we get from them realizations of the main *primordia* of Human Nature. In each case, the actual experience of a loyal worker and his work verifies some connate element of truth; whether that truth be speculative, or practical. Such a verifier of the higher Mathematics was Sir Isaac Newton. With the grand axiom of Logic we associate the name of Aristotle. The Law of Induction calls up the philosophy of Bacon. The most typical man, whose thought, work, life, and death, illustrate and verify the Moral axiom, has been deemed, for ages, Socrates,—a clear proof that Moral Insight is *not* a gift of recent anthropogeny, of modern civilization, convention, or development! Yet, in speaking of Socrates, I should like to subjoin the admirable memory of Kant; nearer to ourselves, and wherever best known, there always the most highly appreciated.

I have now been drawing word-pictures of four elementary Human Truths. In describing them, I have varied my language so as to avoid technical names, which of necessity imply artificial classifications. Besides, in the present transitional—perhaps half-nebular—state of psychology and systematized Ethics, it would seem mischievous to employ tentative language. Let it be ever so distinctly stated that the terms used are provisional, they seem almost certain to awaken foregone theories of some kind. If we incline to consider these four elements of Mind instinctive, they must not be thought of as resem-

bling Instincts commonly so called. If Beliefs, they are not acts of Faith. "Intuitions" and "Innate Ideas" are phrases which *connote* a great deal. In using them, we must needs explain that the Ideas intuited exist in the higher world of Reason; that they cannot be likened to fixed forms of thought and language, but are more like *germinal* growths,—powerful in seizing upon and assimilating their own appropriate *pabulum*, but with *definite* vital processes and developments of their own. The safest way is to treat every such elementary state as a fact imperfectly explained; and to investigate it in the fruits it bears. These are of two kinds: the first factors of thought infer Methods of after-thinking; they also imply a tendency to unification with other mental elements—if, indeed, we may look at Mind as an expression of underlying Unity.

Meantime, when we meditate upon our deep-down Moral Insight, leading to an urgency of Moral Law, and upon our human Will-force, performing or contravening the work of that Law, it is impossible to avoid an impression of mingled hope and sadness. How wondrous it seems, to think what you, and I, and all mankind, might have been—nay, would have been—if our race had grown up steadily true to itself! What we might become, even now, if each generation chose to leave the *best* legacy to each succeeding age! God grant us here present, strength to turn the "might become" into a "may be"! In this way, above all other ways, can we make sure of realizing our individual aspirations after a Life better

and more perfect than the mixed existence forced upon us by the conditions of the world we are now inhabiting. Conditions from which we hope one day to find ourselves set free!

*** NOTE ON P. 173 *ante.*

Had the following extract from Lord Byron's *Giaour* been entirely fit for recital in the pulpit, it would have been quoted, because exceedingly direct:—

"The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the Scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows,
The flames around their captive close,
Till inly search'd by thousand throes,
And maddening in her ire,
One sad and sole relief she knows,
The sting she nourish'd for her foes,
Whose venom never yet was vain,
Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
And darts into her desperate brain:
So do the dark in soul expire,
Or live like scorpion girt by fire;
So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death!"

Compare the celebrated passage of Cicero *pro Roscio* xxiv. (67):—"Nolite putare, quemadmodum in fabulis sæpenumero videtis, eos, qui aliquid impie scelerateque commiserint, agitari et perterreri Furiarum tædis ardentibus. Sua quemque fraus, et suus terror maxime vexat: suum quemque scelus agitat, amentiâque afficit: suæ malæ cogitationes conscientiæque animi terrent. Hæ sunt impiis assiduæ domesticæque Furiæ, quæ dies noctesque pœnas a consceleratissimis repetant."

Add Juvenal's measured words (*Sat.* xiii.):—

> "Exemplo quodcunque malo committitur, ipsi
> Displicet auctori. PRIMA est hæc ultio, quod, se
> Judice, nemo nocens absolvitur."

Out of many paragraphs of Aristotle, let the following be read as a prose comment on Shakespeare's *Richard III.* I am happy to quote them in the language of Mr. Williams's translation:—"A man's personality is chiefly, if not entirely, centred in his Reason. Thus, then, the good man will wish to hold continuous communion with himself, inasmuch as such communion cannot but be pleasant to him. For to him the memories of the past are happy, and the hopes of the future are bright; and memories and hopes of this kind are full of pleasure. He has, moreover, abundant store of thoughts on which to feast his Reason; and it is with his own pains, and with his own pleasures, that he most of all feels sympathy. . . . When a man is absolutely bad, and when his every act is a sin, then he neither has, nor even seems to have, any of these feelings towards himself. One might, indeed, almost say that he cannot possibly have them, if he be bad at all. For the bad are at variance with themselves, so that their desires lead them one way and their better wishes another. . . . And, since they have in them nothing that calls for love, they can feel no affection towards themselves. And, hence, not even in their own joys and sorrows can they have any sympathy with themselves. For their soul is like a city which is at variance with itself, and the one part of it, by reason of their sins, is grieved that it has to abstain from certain things, while the other part is pleased thereat; and the one drags them this way, and the other drags them that, like beasts when they rend a carcase. . . . From all this it clearly follows that the bad man cannot feel towards himself as towards a friend, since he has nothing in him worthy of affection."—*Nicomachean Ethics*, B. IX. ch. iv.

The Science of Human Nature seems much the same amongst highly endowed minds, although many centuries apart.

LECTURE V.

THE PREROGATIVE OF HUMANITY.

LECTURE V.

1 PETER iii. 15.

"BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU, WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR."

THIS text, like many others, illustrates the grand principle that our human life, to be satisfactory, must be all of a pieces. If any one is inclined to make either his faith or his philosophy into a thing of shreds or patches, he will find that the Scripture rebukes him. Apart from that living insight which belongs to every kind of belief, philosophy becomes a wisdom which is foolishness unto God; an opposition of science falsely so called. Neither does Scripture permit Faith to be isolated from that Reason which is Man's divine dotation. My text proves this. And another Apostle says to his Gentile converts, "I speak as to wise men" (philosophers, that is—lovers of wisdom in the truest sense): "judge ye what I say."*

* "The truth is, that science and religion neither are nor can be two fields of knowledge with no possible communication between them. Such an hypothesis is simply absurd." *The Unseen Universe*, Sect. 258. Goethe had said long before: "As soon as we set out from the principle that Knowledge and Faith are not given to destroy each other, but to supply each other's deficiencies, we shall come near to an accurate estimate of the Right."—Johann Falk's *Goethe*, Cap. iv.

The Scriptural treatment of this subject is deeply interesting to us, because it lends the sanction of the Christian Faith (the most practical of all Faiths) to a philosophic *method*—which, again, is of the greatest practical value.

Looking from the side of Christianity upon the four reasonable Beliefs enumerated in my last Lecture, it is easy to see that if none of them were true, nor known by men to be true, Christianity itself must be voiceless. Suppose no such insights existed, there would be no human language in which Christian Oracles could speak, no human ear capable of receiving their utterances. To use St. Paul's graphic simile, we should be Barbarians in respect of their meaning. The Word of God implies a faculty of vision in its messengers; it implies also the elementary factors of apprehension in those to whom its messengers are sent. God draws us with the cords of a man. He deals with Man himself, in this and other respects, as with one made a little lower than the angels.

Viewed from the side of Philosophy, these Insights stand in a double relation to our knowledge. First, they enable us to know the Natural World *intellectually*. Without them Experience would be as voiceless as supernatural revelation. Suppose the principle of Contradiction fell short of axiomatic value,—suppose we had no universally certain data for measuring magnitude or duration, number or succession,—how should we *reason* upon theorems prior to experience, or transcending it? Suppose

Nature were not known to be Uniform, neither did each change postulate a cause of change, how should we obtain *verification* for our reasonings? Our Science of Nature must shrink into chronicled observations—"like Orient pearls at random strung." In the second place, could we by any possibility imagine a human world without a sense of *moral* distinctions—a world where all men's daily conduct was a contest of daily self-interests, without any thought of Responsibility, or any idea that Wrong would ever inconvenience the wrong doer—we shall all feel assured that human life, Civilization, Progress, and Ideal happiness, would in such a world be inconceivable.

In saying thus much, I cannot but observe that, for clearness and useful purpose, a good many further statements and illustrations are required. If I omit them I cannot hope to carry you with me; and if I fail of showing you *how much* is to be said for the principles at stake, I fall short of my object. The difficulty is, how to make the needful statements, and to put the subject in various lights, without exceeding the proper bounds of a Lecture. This difficulty I have felt all along. And the only plan for curtailing explanations seems this: I must say simply what appears true to my own consciousness. In so doing, I leave you to supply some qualifications, obvious enough in themselves, but, if always added, lengthy and wearisome. You will be, also, kind enough to understand my brief statements not as dogmatic assertions, but as so many answers of consciousness,

and so many judgments (the best I am able to furnish) upon the subject-matter. You must finally give me credit for holding back whole regiments of reasons. The parade of those reserves you would find tedious, and I should feel that most of them were needlessly paraded; because among my statements there are many which you will neither deny nor doubt to any real purpose.

In examining the four principles dwelt upon last Sunday, some people might possibly say we have here a question of connate ideas, or intuitions, as distinguished from derivative or educated ideas. Not to criticize this employment of the word Idea, (a word better kept for better uses,) I would earnestly protest against every mode of enquiry which presupposes two or more theories or hypotheses contending for the mastery. There is certainly much more of the Unknown in relation to our first grounds of science, than of the Known. Probably none of us ever will or can know all we require for our entire satisfaction, until we attain some higher sphere of Thought, immeasurably beyond anything we can suppose possible while human life remains what it is at present. And is it certain that all of us will ever attain such insight? It is not every man's feat to scale Olympus now; nor yet may every one hope in a higher state to sit upon that true Parnassus, where Poetry and Reason, Philosophy and Religion are all *at one;* all known in perfection, all supremely beautiful:—

"Too fair to worship, too Divine to love;"

unless indeed they are visibly united as attributes in an Image of the Highest—a Personality commanding our intellect and our affections in every act of adoration.

The safest rule for each of us respecting First-Truths, is never to let go anything which it is given us to apprehend. If we cannot know everything, it does not follow that we are disabled from knowing some things. And if we store up what we clearly discern ourselves, and appreciate what other people have clearly discerned, the practice will not be without its profit. It is the practice of a good householder, who brings out of his treasury old things and new.

The first facts which men in general have perceived respecting axiomatic truths, form the reason why they are called axiomatic. They are indemonstrable; and we cannot do without them. To try and demonstrate any one of them, is to begin by begging the whole question; to try and do without them, is to find them indispensable. Without any one of these four, a whole province of human thought and activity is (as we have intimated) absolutely extinguished.

I purposely avoid such questions as whether there exist other axiomatic insights,—and how many can be defined as certainly human? Or, again, what may be the history of these axioms—their first mode of appearance in the world of Men—their pre-historic archæology—their embryology? Such-like questions would be endless.

Next after the fact that they (the four Truths

under examination) are axiomatic, comes their character of being *genetic*. None of you can accept and keep them, whilst you see, hear, observe, and think, without finding synthetic knowledge crowd in upon you. You are perpetually enlarging your circle of discovery; and this enlargement is exactly what I mean by synthesis. And when you have got some considerable acquisition of knowledge in a *concrete* lump, you may take it to pieces,—that is, *de*compose it. At its base you will find an axiom. With this your analysis stops. No axiom can be decomposed. It is the height of uncultured ignorance — rank ἀπαιδευσία — to ask a further reason—to attempt analyzing a primary element of truth.

In saying this I have said a great deal, and must try to show cause for it. The most comprehensive mode of dealing with indemonstrable and unresolvable Truths, is to begin by bringing to the test of Consciousness those characteristic maxims and organizing Laws which rightfully ensue and claim acceptance by virtue of each several Axiom. But this critical process presupposes some considerable amount of attention and skill on the part of him who sits by as judge, when Consciousness is interrogated. It is best, therefore, to take a further step afterwards, and endeavour to verify the results of our own appeal. It would be impossible for me to attempt so much in regard of all four axioms, within any reasonable limits; I must, therefore, point out common characters of agreement among

them, and then dwell mainly upon the axiom underlying Morality.

Every *genetic* truth—that is, every first-principle prolific in consequences—carries with it some allied truths which, when it is applied, or intended to be applied, it absolutely *necessitates* for its own practical purposes. These allied truths may be called collectively its apparatus. Taken one by one they are termed *Postulates*,—a word most obscure, and the reverse of forcible or reasonable, to any mind which has not considered the conditions of genetic procedure. In Euclid, few young students define to themselves the true position of Postulates, till they observe that Schemata cannot be constructed without them, and that without *schemata* theorems would be useless. For some sciences you can construct sufficiently convincing schemata in your own imagination; and a truly-conceived schema is often the shortest road to a denial or an affirmation. It is thus that Ideas may often be translated into unbending Realities.

For example: In the apparatus, without which the principle of Contradiction would be useless, are contained such mental schemata as the Categories; and they (like the primary axiom of Logic) appeal to our consciousness for the validity of their distinctions.

To any one versed in the history of Oxford Logic, it will be no surprise if he encounters endless controversies over the first-grounds of Morality. Logic would seem more secure than Ethics. Yet no science

has been more scorned than Logic,—no reasoner more vilipended than Aristotle,—especially by that race of metaphysicians who (to use Edward Irving's phrase) "handle an Idea as a butcher handles an ox."

Next after the postulates, or apparatus, necessitated by an axiomatic truth, in order to its becoming genetic, follows another demand equally stringent, and equally characteristic of each several axiom. This second necessity is Method. Let it be observed that the severally characteristic methods do *not* admit of *interchange*. It has been often attempted to apply Schemata to metaphysical reasoning, but the attempt is an acknowledged failure. Symbols, unboundedly powerful in algebraic processes, can only be used under certain limits by the physical sciences. In moral sciences their use would be absurd. The absurdity seems to be a confirmation of the fact that moral truths and inferences should be viewed in a *concrete* shape. Method, however, must be mainly determined by the scope and extent of any given science; and these essential points must in turn be determined by its first-ground. The character of each axiom will necessitate the aims it makes possible, and by consequence the processes adapted to those aims. For instance, mathematics are founded on magnitude and number. They measure the material universe; and it matters not to them whether the All is Finite or Infinite. Yet they cannot gauge Thought. Arithmetic cannot time Thought; Geometry cannot circumscribe it.

We see here a world of *difference* between existences commonly called Material and Immaterial. And the distinction is worth holding fast; since the most ordinary attribute said to be distinctive of Material things is equally true of Mind. Matter, we are told, is impenetrable; you cannot get one piece of timber inside another. But can one Soul be thrust inside another Soul? Nothing in the whole universe appears so defiant, so difficult to penetrate, as Soul. It is hard, absolutely hard; involuntarily shut, even in its tenderness, against the entrance of other Souls. It remains throughout life essentially alone. Hence the poet's question:—

> "Why should we faint and fear to live alone,
> Since all alone, so Heaven has will'd, we die,
> Nor even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh?"

Yet all this may be changed at death. Loving hearts await that lesson; for nothing can be conceived more absolutely blessed than an inward union of Souls. One chief encouragement to hope, as Milton hoped, is found in our Spiritual exemption from the scope and laws of the weighing and measuring sciences.

Take *another* and an allied example. The Law of Induction, which rules all natural science, is the Law of Nature's Uniformity. Outward Nature is here meant; and her course has generally been thought of as Uniform. Even in those ages when Miracles were expected on the most trifling and incongruous occasions, they were alleged violations of the order and sovereignty of Nature. It was this very

circumstance which made them worth recording. The Inductive Law, and the scope of Physical Science, extend, therefore, over the measurable Cosmos. With its bounds they cease and are determined. In point of fact, Physics determine and define their own sphere, for they commence by positing a kind of existence, which in the nature of things must have had an Antecedent, *unknown*, and, to the physicist, always *unknowable*. The beautiful cloud which floats amidst stellar spaces, burning with a faint and twilight ray, is the first fact upon which both Measurement and Nature's uniform Law alike take their stand. The utter blank beyond stimulates the imagination of the scientific thinker. Yet his laws of Force and Motion have no appointed spheres beyond those lovely forms of attenuated Light. There is no Archimedean fulcrum-point outside the Cosmos, whence these Powers can move even so small a world or system as our own.

Compare with this *second* limitation the immeasurable sweep of Thought. The primary axiom of our understanding has respect to incompatible Judgments, and affirms in them an opposition of truth and falsehood; to which, in the sphere of actions, corresponds the Moral incompatibility—the opposition of Right and Wrong. Concerning the vast importance of this *oppositeness* of truth and falsehood, throughout the whole realm of Thought, none but a meditative reasoner can form the most remote conception. But how shall we measure that realm,—the scope and extent

of Reason? We see at once that Thought must be co-existent with thinking substance, and co-extensive with thinkable objects. To us men, the only thinking substance known (not in its essential Being, but in its manifestations), is our own *inner* Self, revealed to us. Numberless efforts have been made to identify this thinking substance with our palpable human brain. All those efforts have been failures, for a sufficient reason, which I will render in the words of Mr. Stuart Mill.

"There are thinkers," he observes, "who, because the phenomena of life and consciousness are associated in their minds by undeviating experience with the action of material organs, think it an absurdity *per se* to imagine it possible that those phenomena can exist under any other conditions. But they should remember that the uniform co-existence of one fact with another does not make the one fact a part of the other, or the same with it. The relation of thought to a material brain is no metaphysical necessity, but simply a constant co-existence within the limits of observation." *

And in a preceding paragraph he asks, What is the verdict of Science?—(meaning, of course, Inductive Science):—

"It does not," he says, "prove, experimentally, that any mode of organization has the power of producing feeling or thought. To make that proof good, it would be necessary that we should be able to produce an organism, and try whether it would feel; which we cannot do; organisms cannot by any human means be produced,—they can only be developed out of a previous organism." †

If, then, we interrogate phenomenal Nature, the answer we gain is that there exists a material *concomitancy* in the operations of thought, which, for

* *Essays*, p. 199. † *Ibid*, pp. 197, 8.

our *environing* world, is also a material *condition*. But whether this condition is anything more than the result of a *present nexus*,—a mode of *inter*-communication between *two* spheres—the Spiritual and the Material, now allied, yet essentially dissimilar,—no science of Nature can inform us. As Dr. Tyndall truly says, "We try to soar in a vacuum the moment we seek to comprehend the connexion between them." * Interrogate Thought *per se;* and it yields, neither in its axioms nor yet in its aim or scope, the slightest appearance of Limitation. Mathematics, physics, do (as we have said) *limit themselves*. But, so far as Thought is concerned, its apparent claim is to be *Unlimited*. And this claim is confirmed by the reflection that each *self*-limitation of Thought becomes a new *nisus formativus*—a spring of onward movement in thinking. The negative gives rise to a fresh affirmative; and this process seemingly extends *ad infinitum*.

* *Address at Belfast*, ed. 7, p. 59. Compare *Preface* to same edition, page xxix. "Given the masses of the planets and their distances asunder, and we can infer the perturbations consequent on their mutual attractions. Given the nature of a disturbance in water, air, or ether, and from the physical properties of the medium we can infer how its particles will be affected. The mind runs along the line of thought which connects the phenomena, and from beginning to end finds no break in the chain. But when we endeavour to pass by a similar process from the physics of the brain to the phenomena of consciousness, we meet a problem which transcends any conceivable expansion of the powers we now possess. We may think over the subject again and again; it eludes all intellectual presentation: we stand at length face to face with the Incomprehensible."

Now, this specific nature of Thought, and the validity claimed by its axioms, together give a sufficient assurance that, if the Universe contains myriads of thinking Beings, the laws of Thought, true for us, are true for them in respect of the thinkable objects presented to their apprehension. If the principle of contradiction could be invalidated at all, we should never be able to say "This necessarily *is* true, and that is *necessarily* false." Our case *might* be the *one* invalid example. Here, again, appears a close resemblance to the Moral axiom. We could not assert the actual supremacy of Right; and that its antithesis is *necessarily* Wrong, in *any* instance, however small, were the Moral distinction anything less than a supreme Reality—a Power authoritative, absolute, and undeniable. In both these cases—the Intellectual and the Moral spheres of Truth—their claim is a transcendent vitality, a sufficing insight. If transcendent as regards our world's present boundaries, and unlimited by laws of Space, then surely possessed of a *primâ-facie* claim to transcend the cycles of what mortals call Time, and to exist in an unmeasured Futurity. The plain fact seems to be, that any attempts to limit Thought and Morality are endeavours to weigh the imponderable, and measure what has neither figure nor dimensions.

There are other reasons for the Permanence of Thought and Moral Truth, which I cannot now enumerate. But it may be worth while to recal the argument which satisfied Goethe, as he told

his friend on the day of Wieland's funeral. A noble soul is a culminated Perfection—a star in the Zenith—a Mind-force become absolutely inestimable. Its extinction appears to be forbidden by the law of Conservation, written on the face of the Universe. It would be inconsistent with the Parsimony of Nature. Moreover, Human Nature has always felt how *human* was this belief,—how Inhuman must be a doubt of it. Is not Man, in fact, the most finished and complete Reality of the world he inhabits?* Far above its vegetative existences; its lower animalities, little better than shapes moulded by the skyey influences of which they are susceptible. Far above all richer forms of life—richer, but still lacking Man's Thought and Moral Insight. And if such is, indeed, his true position, then the very outcome and *set* of his Being carries an evidence that his worth claims continuance; that his onward, *upward* tendency is a prophecy of permanence—and the chief instinct of his whole nature not less veracious than lower instincts daily and hourly verified. Without a Belief in Permanence, the larger part of Man's horizon would be veiled in utter darkness. When spurred to exertion and earnest endeavour, he would say, with hopeless despondency,—

"Enjoy this span of life! 'tis all the gods afford."

Far, far different, from that nobler and more truly human thought,—

* See Johann Falk's *Goethe*, cap. iv. In this spirit Goethe calls "Man the first Dialogue which Nature held with God."

> "It must be so.—Plato, thou reason'st well!
> Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after Immortality?"

It surely makes not only some, but an immeasurable difference to you and me, whether we believe, or do not believe, that our Thought-power and Moral-power,—the objects of our care and culture, our hope and our self-devotion,—shall or shall not be extinguished. All Oxford—our whole glorious University—was founded in the faith that high thinking and noble living, both in themselves and in their issues, endure for ever. And if, as a *Pietas Oxoniensium*, this belief is kept by us, it will help our hardest work when no other reward is in prospect. To use old Herbert's words, this Faith, without which the Law of God would be powerless,—

> "Makes drudgery Divine."

A very different toil from the sordid task of grinding in the intellectual mill, for the sole sake of such money gain, and other gains, as may probably wait upon success! And thus it will be with us onward throughout our lives: they must be always poor, always miserable, unless we can hold fast the Postulates of Thought and Morality, and find in them the truths of our inward Permanence and Freedom from the material law of dissolution.

Looked at philosophically, these various Postulates appear ascertained to us by the undeniable validity of the axioms which necessitate them. We have seen good cause for this absolute, though

indemonstrable, validity. If, moreover, it can be esteemed a justifiable hypothesis, to say that our primary insights have grown up to their present strength and amplitude through long periods of continuance,—if they form a legacy of culture and attainment bequeathed from age to age: a blessing sent down to children's children during many generations,—*then* it will manifestly follow:—first, that these endowments are (as we have said) genuinely *human;* next, that they have been *certified* unnumbered times, examined and confirmed with each successive act of registry. Ancestral axioms and postulates for Thinking and Doing, are heirlooms of ancestral verification—monuments ratified afresh with every fresh descent. The possibility of looking at our insights in this way is a good motive (amongst other motives) for calling them Beliefs of Reason. It is a good motive, also, for assigning a Primacy to the one truth most surely characteristic of Human Nature—the best ascertained, therefore, and the most completely verified.

For whensoever we examine the four axioms before enumerated, with a view of selecting by comparison the one thus distinctive of Humanity, we may be sure that the special axiom on which Morality rests, will always gain by the scrutiny. It is true, that all four ought to stand or fall together—they ought in reason to be rejected as a whole, or as a whole to be accepted. Whether we speculate over a mathematical problem, or observe the Natural world, and philosophize on its

Production or its destinies, we always do and always must look through a human eye, and think with a human thought-power. There is no fact of Experience—no proposition in Logic—no Moral maxim —which can to us be otherwise than thoroughly humanized. Whoever speaks of beholding nature or human nature from a point of view *extrinsic* to Man, is after all a Man himself, and will be most clear-sighted when most true to his Humanity. Yet, if any of the four axioms under comparison can be held most absolutely human, it is that one upon which Ethical truth and the truths of Natural Religion are founded. For these are the distinctive qualities which remove Mankind farthest from the merely animal sphere. A not unfair test is the favourite one of observing the points in which the unreasoning animal creation most nearly approaches Man. But the problem is in fact unsolved. The higher creatures recognize and remember persons, places, and times. They associate observances taught them, with the recurrence of appropriate days and occasions. Their arithmetical powers are often subjects of interest; but we have not yet decided, by satisfactory experiments, whether the bird or quadruped can count beyond *two*. You will all recollect the story of the dog and the three roads. It has been vouched for in pagan philosophy; by less ancient naturalists; and is sometimes repeated as the record of fresh personal observation. If the narrative may be trusted (and there is probable reason to think it may), we are clear that a well-bred, well-tutored dog

can, not only count three, but *subtract*, or perhaps proceed by something like logical abscission. Then, as to rudimentary Induction, experiment is a familiar resort with highly-improved animals; as with the elephant and the foot-bridge, the cat or dog once scalded or snared, and in other instances. Every creature has an evident trust in the uniformity of *his* world—the world in which he collects food, builds his shelter, or makes provision for progeny, or for his own metamorphoses. The *domesticated* creature trusts in the uniformity of his *higher* world; the Human world on which he depends,—that world of Man, to whom he looks with confidence for continued care and kindness—a confidence often ill repaid, but still unshaken. We see this in the horrible histories of vivisection. The tortured animal continues, amidst his agony, to caress the hand of his tormentor.

But, in bar of all approaches towards Humanity, there has always been a fatal limit. What unreasoning creature, however highly developed, is educable in the sense that a human *baby* is educable? The teaching of an infant-school is removed by an utter *disparateness* (if I may use a word not in Richardson), by which I mean, not only a disparity, but an ineffaceably disparate character, from the powers of the whole Animal kingdom. Self-education seems more hopelessly remote still. Throughout the ages during which animals have lived, suffered, and sickened, they have never attempted to cure a disease, or alleviate the pains of an injury. Man is the only

physician and sick-nurse of organized creatures. But all other limitary contrasts fall short of the Moral interval. No creature void of Reason has ever been known to sit in self-condemning judgment on its own life. None can exercise the faculties, and act upon the primary insights underlying remorse, repentance, and self-reformation. Now, in proportion as we cultivate within ourselves these toilsome endowments, we make our lives pre-eminently human. Man's stern moralities draw a boundary line, which cannot be overpassed, between sensitive impulse and deliberate choice; between the movements of animal life, which amuse and please us, and the sentence of a Law written on our hearts: accusing or else excusing our daily deeds and our daily neglects. We watch, with pleasure, in our dog or horse, such manifestations of hope, fear, and grateful attachment as our own training and culture have called forth. The being of the creature seems nerved by a striving to meet its master's wishes, and gain approval from his eye. This is perhaps the highest state ever attainable in animal existence. It is simply one of impulse, strengthened by custom; and we like to trace in it some resemblance to our own impulsive feelings and habituations. Yet the law of Morality, deep down in Man's nature, removes the likeness to an *infinite* distance. When a man *loves*, the tide of affection turns back upon its source, to sun itself beneath the light of Reason; to gain strength from the inevitable self-scrutiny which reigns supreme over emotion and sentiment, as well as over purpose

and action. What was feeling becomes Will—high resolve, tinctured with duty and devotion; an affection which, to be eradicated from the Man, must tear away his heart-strings;—

"They sin who tell us Love can die!"

Man's real Love will never die, if Man himself is immortal! The same Moral Law vindicates itself throughout all social ties. For Society is not gregariousness. A herd of men would not be a nation. That very idea is an absurd misnomer, except when human ties have been relaxed by some disruption in the history of a people. True human society is Moral Sociality; and the best patriotism, a truly human self-education. Train yourselves in strict moralities; and you will be true to your own interests, the interests of your country, and to the aim and Ideal of Humanity.

Let me add to this topic, from which we must now pass, some thoughtful words of Wilhelm von Humboldt:—

"If we would point to an idea which all history throughout its course discloses as ever establishing more firmly and extending more widely its salutary empire . . . it is the idea of our common humanity; tending to remove the hostile barriers which prejudices and partial views of every kind have raised between men, and to cause all Mankind, without distinction of religion, nation, or colour, to be regarded as one great fraternity, aspiring towards one common aim—the free development of their moral faculties. This is the ultimate and highest object of society; it is also the direction implanted in Man's nature, leading towards the indefinite expansion of his inner being. . . . By a double aspiration after the unknown future and the unforgotten past—after that which he desires, and

that which he has lost—Man is preserved, by a beautiful and touching instinct, from exclusive attachment to that which is present."*

Man is, in truth, the only creature detached by the law of his nature from the Present. This single fact contains, in itself, a Prophecy of that Future, in which alone the earnest endeavour of his manhood can be completely realized.

We must now turn our attention another way. We have seen that, among the four axiomatic and indemonstrable beliefs underlying all we know of Nature and of ourselves, two have a special reference to the universe which can be weighed and measured—the universe of fixed law and order—the Mechanism of the Heavens, and the Mechanism of the world we live in. The other two axioms refer to another Universe of imponderable, non-measurable, Entities—the Universe of Thought and Moral Truth. Yet all four coincide so far forth as they are *genetic* principles—that is to say, axioms from which Discovery and Knowledge *grow*. There cannot but be differences of results, and differences in the processes of growth. What we have now to find and explain, is the Method which concerns us most—*that* Method by virtue of which the Moral Insight of Mankind necessitates the acceptance of Natural Religion.

It is quite true that to many minds the enquiry will seem needless. With them, the undeniable aspiration, the instinct, the sentiment, will always appear sufficient grounds for believing in Retribution,

* *Ueber die Kaw.-Sprache*, iii., 426.

Immortality, and God. Unquestionably, this hunger of Humanity is an integral part of our nature. And we might ask, with Aristotle, Shall man's appetition be in vain? This "deep-set feeling," says Dr. Tyndall, "since the earliest dawn of history, and probably for ages prior to all history, incorporated itself in the Religions of the world. . . . To yield this sentiment reasonable satisfaction is the problem of problems at the present hour. . . It is vain to oppose this force with a view to its extirpation."* So truly is Natural Religion, with its feelings of awe, reverence, and wonder, "woven into the texture of Man." I am not aware of any rational answer to this line of thought. Its conclusion seems to be inexpugnable, except at the cost of denying the worth and reality of human feeling, experience, knowledge,—in one word, of all the rest of Man.

Our present business, however, is to vindicate the claims of a Method ensuing upon facts as positive as any which the universe contains. We have to show that this *Human* Fact-science so far transcends the material circle, that Death becomes no more than a triumphal archway on the road of its royal progress.

What is meant by this Method, we shall most easily demonstrate by comparison. I will adduce for this purpose the best known of Fact-methods,—the method of physical science.

* *Address at Belfast*, as printed for the Association, p. 81: Ed. 7, p. 60. The *last* quoted passage was removed by Dr. Tyndall from the published editions of his *Address*, but is given by him in his *Preface* to Ed. 7, p. viii.

When we look into the history of the Inductive sciences, it is evident that the principle of Induction has not always been very prolific. It was not so whenever it suggested a bare method of inference from the simple enumeration of observed examples. Typical instances, such as you see frequently in Aristotle, require much practical insight for their exact appreciation. They *lead* an intelligent mind easily up to a truthful judgment, but are thrown away upon the unintelligent. The greatest conquests of Induction have been gained by a system of *interrogating* Nature, framing questions and devising crucial experiments to answer them—the boast and beauty of the Baconian philosophy as far as it is practised in modern day. There is, of course, a difficulty in applying this Method so as to make sure of our inferences. To frame a question we must have already framed some hypothesis,—limited, perhaps, and tentative,—but still some hypothesis. If Experiment agrees, Hypothesis grows stronger and wider. To be truthfully comprehensive, new facts are wanted—and, by consequence, new experiments. Finally, suppose all seems complete, and a type or law of Nature appears ascertained to us, we must have a verifying process. Hence, continued experimentation.

I daresay you know that Dr. Faraday's wonderful power lay in devising experiments adjusted to the points of the hypotheses suggested by his teeming brain. You may remember, also, that Hypothesis is generally the work of a trained scientific Imagina-

tion—a mixture of genius and experience. It will also seem to you that the Inductive principle itself, the law of Nature's uniformity—the aphorism "No change without a cause of change"—must *per se* have acquired a wonderful stability from the perpetual use of experiment, the ever-resulting gain of verification.

But now comes a most serious enquiry. Men speak of Natural Science as pre-eminently experience. Its validity, we are told a thousand times over, rests first, on facts experienced,—next, on experimental verification. Are these statements *absolutely* true?

We know that they are open to very damaging questions. And from the answers to these questions we derive a different account of the matter. So different, as to necessitate another speculative basis for physical science, and another confirmation for its conclusions.

We may be quite sure that all sciences will endeavour to become philosophies. It is well if they do not pretend to rank as *the* Philosophy. To this general rule, Natural Science is no exception; it has been, and still is, striving after some hidden Unity, some living principle, to explain and lend form and movement to the whole. This attempt has modified its scientific grounding and procedure, as you will perceive from the following examples.

Writing upon the newest department of biological science — Anthropogeny — Mr. Huxley defines its

position and the position of several other scientific conceptions in these words:—

"It need hardly be said, that in dealing with such a problem as this, science rapidly passes beyond the bounds of positively verifiable fact, and enters those of more or less justifiable speculation. But there are very few scientific problems, even of those which have been and are being most successfully solved—which have been, or can be, approached in any other way.

"Our views respecting the nature of the planets, of the sun and stars, are speculations which are not, and cannot be, directly verified; that great instrument of research, the atomic hypothesis, is a speculation which cannot be directly verified; the statement that an extinct animal, of which we know only the skeleton, and never can know any more, had a heart and lungs, and gave birth to young which were developed in such and such a fashion, may be one which admits of no reasonable doubt, but it is an unverifiable hypothesis." *

Now, does Natural Science require verification before it demands our belief for its statements, or does it not? Mr. Huxley goes on to say, that "unverified, and even unverifiable, hypotheses may be great aids to the progress of knowledge—may have a right to be believed with a high degree of assurance." Why, then, may not *other* transcendent assertions, if credibly grounded, have a right to be believed? The distinguished Biologist takes the familiar instance of evolution, and observes that "if it be admitted that the evolution hypothesis is in great measure beyond the reach of verification, it by no means follows that it is not true, still less that it is not of the utmost value and importance."

In his assertion of transcendent Beliefs the Biologist is fully supported by the Physicist. In Dr.

* *Academy* for January 2, 1875, p. 17.

Tyndall's preface to the seventh edition of his well-known Belfast *Address*, he remarks:—

"I am blamed for crossing the boundary of the experimental evidence. This, I reply, is the habitual action of the scientific mind —at least, of that portion of it which applies itself to physical investigation. Our theories of light, heat, magnetism, and electricity, all imply the crossing of this boundary. My paper on the 'Scientific Use of the Imagination,' and my 'Lectures on Light' illustrate this point in the amplest manner. . . . . The kingdom of science . . . . is completed by fixing the roots of observation and experiment in a region inaccessible to both, and in dealing with which we are forced to fall back upon the picturing power of the mind."*

These accounts of the methods used by Natural Science-Philosophy in its wider generalizations, are very plain and ungainsayable. They may probably outweigh—they certainly ought to outweigh—the intolerable positiveness of inferior men, who, dwelling on the confines of exact and popular thought, speak the dialect customary in that twilight region. Their incessant outcry is this: Natural Theology, Moral Philosophy, and Natural Religion, are transcendent, and ought to be rejected. For they are wanting in the rigorous proofs of physical discovery, together with its rigidly required and attained verifications. These are the Baconian laws,—this the Baconian method. These laws and this method are now extended over the whole domain of Philosophy.

The outcry of such writers is false, both in assertion and inference. It was long ago evident that Natural Science had become magnificently transcendent. Sceptics refused to hear this truth,

* *Preface*, p. xiv.

because they desired to keep an excuse for remaining sceptics. Hence the anger with which Dr. Tyndall's paper on the Scientific Use of the Imagination was received in sceptical circles. He had broken their idol of Physical Science-method; he had himself advanced into the forbidden territories of the Metaphysician. In so doing, he had abolished that supposed antagonism between the methods of Natural and of Moral science.

Mr. Huxley has done worse. For, in the article already quoted, he speaks with calm contempt of "those so-called Baconian Principles": "which," he adds, "everybody talks about and nobody dreams of putting into practice." Moreover, he observes, in favour of his own belief, as we Moralists may observe respecting ours, that if those Baconian principles so-called "forbid us to draw the one conclusion, they forbid us to draw the other."* By such prohibition, therefore, a vast territory of Natural Science would be lost. As a matter of fact, the true Bacon forbade nothing of the kind, either way. He contemplated a Natural-Science Philosophy, rising up to unverifiable issues. He believed in Moral Science, Natural Theology, and Natural Religion. He accepted them, with their present proofs and verifications, and their future transcendent finalities.

We may, therefore, hope to hear less continual iterations of "Experience and nothing but Experience,"—an outcry false (as we have seen) both in premiss and in conclusion. We may hope, also,

* *Academy*, as before.

that the true value of Moral Distinctions—verifiable, and verified in the history of Mankind—will for the future be more fairly appreciated.

You will now perceive that the method pursued by Moralists has gained by comparison,—just as we anticipated. It will gain still more, if we place in a stronger light certain contrasts between the *mental* axiom on which Induction rests, and the teachings of Experience. As to the first, the grand Principle of Uniformity, it is absolute. But could any limited experience have given it that *un*limited validity? Would *a hundred million and one* verifications make up the *Universality* of an absolute Law? The actual event may be altered the *hundred million and second* time. So far as Experience can go, an empirical law of continuance founded on observed uniformities may very possibly be subject to the interference of one or more hidden laws, which (like the stern Lords of Ravenswood) "bide their time." It is actually so with the late Mr. Babbage's calculating machine. One uniform law of its numbers appears to be going on for ever. Of a sudden, at the *hundred million and second* number, there is a change: a new law annuls the old one, and takes its place, to go on and on in long array; then, in time, to be superseded. We cannot say that this same event is impossible, or even improbable, *if* we build our desired Universal Law upon the fact of Nature's present and observed sequency. An enormous induction by simple enumeration may have yielded this generalized fact-law of experience; but, after all, the

enumeration never can be exhaustive, and the *final* fact itself may be exactly the other way. As far as Nature's persistent Uniformity is concerned, the law of Experience does in effect resolve itself into Hume's old theory of custom and expectation. In simpler words, it is a law *not* really universal

But this is not all; and so very much confusion of Thought exists upon the whole subject that it seems worth while to clear up one further point. Most persons are apt to mix together in their minds the *two very distinct conceptions* of which we have spoken. One, the *axiomatic* belief given us as a primary truth underlying all our Inductive processes. The other, the *visibly* uniform course of Nature, as it now exists, and forms our customary experience. Upon this confusion is founded what some call the common-sense question, others the absurd question—"Will the sun rise to-morrow and always?" Upon this same confusion, again, is based the optimist theory of an infinitely perfectible human race, living eternally on in this world, which also is theoretically held destined to endure for ever. Now, if we try to answer the question about sunrise *first*, we must say that for to-morrow it is so probable as to be a practical certainty. At all events, no human being who predicts it can be laughed at by other human beings who live to discover his mistake. Were our Earth's rotation suddenly stopped, our then existing Race, with all its works—its cloud-capped towers, its gorgeous palaces, its solemn temples—would all be hurled, quivering and shattered, with irresistible vio-

lence, into the desolate fields of Space. Next, as to the optimistic belief in endless duration, we know for certain that the axiom, change always correlates every cause of change, is sure at some time to be verified by a change in Nature,—itself so vast as to baffle computation. Her present uniform appearance does in fact cover *sufficient cause* for the greatest of all conceivable changes. Physical science, after some oscillations of opinion, has presented us with a view of the Universe, not altogether unlike that which sixteenth century astronomers loved to discover in Aristotle. He had supposed luminous matter to be given off by stars in the galaxy—the nebulous belt of which seemed to glimmer with the incandescence of a mighty Comet for ever reproducing itself. From such a material the star of 1572 was thought to derive its birth. A conjecture of Democritus (in which the ingenuity of your Manilius may have interested you) is now allowed to contain more truth.* Cloudy light has been extensively resolved into distant star-clusters—clusters, that is to say, of suns and systems so immensely remote as to be reckoned another Universe; or, if I may borrow a foreign phrase, other *Universa* distinct and separate from our own. The rays of some such far-away stars floating in the infinity of Distance have (by computation) travelled 700,000 years before reaching our

> "An major densâ stellarum turba coronâ
> Contexit flammas, et crasso lumine candet,
> Et fulgore nitet collato clarior orbis?"
>
> M. Manilii *Astronomicon.* Lib. i. 754-6.

globe.* Yet, after all these deductions are made, extensive fields of *un*resolved nebulous matter are shown to us, carried back by powerful telescopes from familiar constellations to unfamiliar and almost impenetrable tracts of Space. So large are certain masses thus revealed, that two million times the size of our Sun has not been thought an impossible calculation. In old Indian Philosophy, some such general condition of matter is represented as a *fifth* element, out of which the heaven and stars were formed. Modern science has for years considered and reconsidered this cosmical question. The daring hypothesis of Buffon is known to readers of his Natural History. But among scientific circles it became lost in the deeper views of Herschel and Laplace.† Their astronomy has now been confirmed

* The distance represented by such figures must appear practically inconceivable. But some idea of what is meant by speaking of other *Universa* may be formed in this way:—First, the light of Sirius when it reaches the eye has travelled about twenty-two years, of Arcturus twenty-six, of the Pole-star fifty, of Capella seventy-two years. Next, consider our own Universe: the real magnitude of the Galaxy is unknown, but Herschel's estimates reached 18,000,000 stars. The light from its most remote regions is computed to be, when measured in time, 10,000 years distant. What then must be a remoteness measured as 700,000 years?

It is, of course, obvious to common sense that calculations of this kind are of a subtle and refined description. Their results must needs be approximates. Modern science, however, tends more and more to astonishment, and its prose transcends the most sublime imaginations of poetry.

† It is a fact not known to "every schoolboy" that Laplace built upon the foundation of Kant, whose great work, *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels*, was published in 1755. The

by spectroscope analysis. Matter, vaporous in condition, shining with a faint luminosity, agitated by rotary motion, and holding in a diffused state elements which belong to our world,—matter so diffused, so unfit for, yet necessary to animal life, is looked on as the precursor of our present *Universum*, and of other external *Universa*, if I may so speak.* The

remarkable point about this book is that it unites in one view the Mechanism of Nature and a Teleology recognized throughout the Universe; in other words, it is a combination of Natural Science with Natural Theology. A very brief sketch of its contents, abridged from Ueberweg, may not be unacceptable: "The fundamental philosophical idea of the work is the compatibility of a *mechanical* explanation of nature, which, without arbitrary limitations, seeks in all cases a natural cause in place of all other causes, with a *teleology* which views all nature as depending on God.

"Kant, therefore, sees elements of truth in the opposed doctrines. That the forces of nature themselves work *intelligently*, bears witness to the existence of an intelligent Author of nature. Matter is subject to certain laws, left to which alone she must necessarily bring forth combinations of beauty. But this very fact compels the assumption that God exists. For how were it possible that things of various natures in combination with each other should strive to effect such exquisite accords and beauties, unless they owned a common origin in an infinite Mind, in which the essential qualities of all things were wisely planned? . . .

"Since God works through the laws implanted in matter itself, the *immediate* cause of every result is to be sought in the forces of Nature themselves. The original centrifugal motion which, together with gravitation, determines the course of the planets, is also to be explained by the agency of natural forces. It originated when the matter of the sun and planets, which was at first an extended, vaporous mass, began to shape itself into balls, the collision of the masses causing side motions. The genesis and stability of the system of fixed stars are to be conceived according to the analogy of the genesis and stability of the planetary system."

* The student who wishes to pursue telluric elements to our sun, the fixed stars, and the mighty masses of unresolved nebulæ, should

order of things we behold had, therefore, a beginning from what, before that beginning, must have been an inconceivably great chaotic cloud. Respecting the nebulous circle once co-extensive with our own system, it is computed that several millions of cubic

consult Dr. Schellen's excellent *Spectrum Analysis*, part iii. The work has been well translated by the Misses Lassell, and is edited and annotated by the eminent Dr. Huggins. It is charmingly illustrated. I subjoin two or three very short excerpts:—"Telescopes leave us in uncertainty as to whether these nebulæ are masses of luminous gas, which in the lapse of ages would pass through the various stages of incandescent liquid (the sun and fixed stars), of scoriæ or gradual formation of a cold and non-luminous surface (the earth and planets), and finally of complete gelation and torpidity (the moon), or whether they exist as a complete and separate system of worlds. . . . To the spectroscope we are indebted for being able to say with certainty that luminous nebulæ actually exist as isolated bodies in space, and that these bodies are luminous masses of gas. . . . The spectroscope, in combination with the telescope, affords means for ascertaining even now some of the phases through which the sun and planets have passed in their process of development or transition from masses of luminous nebulæ to their present condition. . . . It is hardly conceivable that a system of such a nebulous form could exist without internal motion. The bright nucleus, as well as the streaks curving round it in the same direction, seem to indicate an accumulation of matter towards the centre, with a gradual increase of density, and a rotatory movement. . . . Half of the nebulæ giving a continuous spectrum have been resolved into stars, and about a third more are probably resolvable; while of those yielding a spectrum of lines, not one has been certainly resolved by Lord Rosse. . . . Those nebulæ giving a continuous spectrum are clusters of actual stars, while those giving a spectrum of bright lines must be regarded as masses of luminous gas, of which nitrogen and hydrogen form the chief constituents." (Sect. 67, *Spectra of Nebulæ and Clusters.*)

Another useful book for those who wish to acquire vivid ideas of the Cosmos, its forces, and its phenomena, is by Messrs. Nasmyth and Carpenter—a most interesting volume entitled "The Moon."

miles of its vapoury matter would be required to weigh one single grain.

Such being the *primordia* of all material existence, conceivable and actual, the force of gravitation induced a consequent approximation of the molecules, converted motion into heat, and thus lighted up the lamps of the Cosmos. How beautiful the warmth and brilliancy in which our species has basked, the tongues of men and angels might fail to say. So beautiful, that no one can wonder at untutored minds thinking the Universe Divine. So beautiful, that a theory of infinite duration and infinite optimism may appear thoroughly natural. Yet it is not really so. It cannot be so. The same science which gauges the beginning of the Universe assigns to it an end. The Universe is not a mere *collection* of Matter; it is a thing of *Energy:* we may never liken it, says Physical Philosophy, to a candle not lit; but rather to a candle that has been lighted. It cannot have been burning from Eternity; the time will come when it must cease to burn. Its aggregation and condensation have produced light and heat—the sources to us of energy, nutriment, enjoyment. But this very fact makes us "look to an end in which the whole universe will be one equally heated inert mass, and from which everything like life or motion or beauty will have utterly gone away."* Or, to put the thing in another shape,—as we find it put by a second authority,—the universal "store of Force, which can only suffer loss and not gain, must

* Balfour Stewart, *Conservation of Energy*, Sect. 210.

be finally exhausted." * In the same way that our conjectures as to the time of a beginning are baffled, so too as to the time of an end. It is sufficient for us to know, that just as each one of us must endure the thought of his individual death, so must our race endure the like thought collectively. Still, let it not be forgotten that the physical philosophers who thus write are not unmindful of a more solemn fact. The one I have last quoted—Helmholtz—does not omit to add that "the human race has higher moral problems before it, the bearer of which it is, and in the completion of which it fulfils its destiny." †

And so it always was with Philosophy. So it always must be. Put Physical and Moral Existence side by side, and examine their *conditions* in the light of facts, so far as facts disclose them. There can be no doubt which promises the *longer* duration.

* Helmholtz, *On the Interaction of Natural Forces*, in his "Lectures," p. 191.

† *Ibid*, p. 193. To quote a third authority.:—"The earth will gradually lose its energy of rotation, as well as that of revolution round the sun. The sun himself will wax dim and become useless as a source of energy, until at last the favourable condition of the present solar system will have quite disappeared.

"But what happens to our system will happen likewise to the whole visible universe, which will inevitably become a lifeless mass, if indeed it be not doomed to utter dissolution. In fine, it will become old and effete, no less truly than the individual: it is a glorious garment, this visible universe, but not an immortal one—we must look elsewhere if we are to be clothed with immortality as with a garment." *Unseen Universe*, Sect. 193.

These paragraphs would have been cited in the text, but the book in which they appear had not been published when this fifth Lecture was under preparation for the pulpit.

Our reason is plain. The known condition of Natural existence is self-destructive. The known condition of Moral existence is self-developing. Man's Moral life exemplifies the laws consequent upon its primary axiom in such a manner that there appears *no limit* imposed upon its Development. The Development of the Natural world, observed by us, contains *in itself* an apparently sufficient cause of arrest and final alteration.

Yet, as regards both instances—the Moral and the Physical also—the primary Truth grasped by human Reason remains equally unshaken, and is equally assured of ultimate verification. Over against the grandest of all suicides—the Suicide of Nature—stands the axiomatic Law of Natural Uniformity, the Insight which tells us that change always correlates a cause of change. The collapse of the Material Universe will stand, to this law, in the relation of a magnificent example. And thus the First Principle, *as given to Man in his Thought*, will be unmistakeably verified by the termination of that present visible scene of uniformity, to which common thinkers cling as their best ascertainable ground for believing in the Law destined to survive it.

In reading the most recent conclusions of modern science, one cannot help recalling the impression made upon certain men of old: that, "since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."* Hence they rejected the Church's teaching that "the elements

* 2 Peter iii. 4.

shall melt with fervent heat."* Yet this seems to be our nearest conception of the inevitable finality.

The axiomatic Law on which Induction is based will, therefore, gain a conclusive triumph from a change which may appear to us as ultimate. We ought, however, steadily to guard ourselves against imagining that this *ultimatum* closes anything beyond our limited telescopic view into physical futurities. When we are told that the universe will no longer be a fit abode for living beings, we must conceive the *un*fitness as having reference to the Forms of Life now and here known to us. But, can we say what will be fit or unfit, when Human Spirits are not unclothed, but clothed upon, so that Mortality is swallowed up of Life? What of that Spiritual Body which shall succeed this corruptible flesh and blood? —what of Forms, such as do not require a sustenance, so ethereal-sounding, of the honeycomb?—of Forms given to those which shall be even as the Angels? What we do know and ought to hold fast, is the reality—not the probable conjecture, but the actual fact-existence—of a Moral Life which claims in its own nature to *transcend* the limit of physical death. Its claim can be *nothing less;* because the essential condition of true Moral Life is *freedom from the chain and determinism of the whole material sphere.*

To some extent, each one of the four axioms examined coincides in asserting for itself some kind of transcendental existence. The world of phenomena cannot be the whole world, otherwise Science

* 2 Peter iii. 10.

is impossible. There may be discerned in every Cosmical law some *constructive* principle transcending all phenomena. When we *think* such a law, we think a Somewhat which was before them and is now above them all. And this Somewhat is not given us by inanimate Nature, nor yet by any kind of experience. It is mirrored in *our own* Nature; and its transcendent character admonishes us *not* to predict for ourselves a final dissolution. Whatever Truth-power transcends phenomena, transcends the Law of their mutability, and, by consequence, *negatives* every supposed likelihood that it is itself and in its own nature extinguishable.

With this coincides the voice of Human Instinct—the "*non omnis moriar*" of Man.

But above all, and *firmer* than all, is the Moral Contradictory. An "ought" or "ought not" claims an *un*limited obedience whensoever the antithesis is distinct. It claims the *whole* Man. If any person feels doubtful whether, in any given case, the Antithesis *is* sufficiently distinct, let him ask the question Is *this* "ought to do" a maxim which it would be right and excellent for *all* Beings morally constituted to observe? The answer will decide. By the one character of Universality is established an empire over each individual agent. Because it *is* Universal, the Moral Law possesses the force of a categorical Imperative supreme over action: in other words, it possesses the force of an *Ethical Necessity*. But this is very far from being all. That very same force extends its sovereignty over other realms. It

becomes, in its consequences, the strongest and most absolute Necessity conceivable, not only for an individual Man, for his race, and for other Beings morally constituted like himself, but also for each portion of the Cosmos physically linked with the ultimate destinies of Mankind. We have seen that the accustomed glories of sun and moon, planets and stars, carry the causes of their change within themselves; and must fulfil the uniform law of Nature by yielding to those causes. Yet the Law governing their change *remains* when they wax old and perish. Now, the Moral Law is a Peer of the Law of Induction, in respect of its seat within the Soul, and its primary claim to be accepted and made a ground of human activity. It is *far more* than a Peer, when we consider *how much* that claim involves. For under *what* conditions can Morality accomplish its warfare and put on its robes of Victory? Not (we are quite sure) under the present conditions of our mortal life, nor yet of the world we live in. Why the conflict between Good and Evil should exist, is a very deep question: the fact that it does exist, is a reality patent enough to us all. Whosoever *will* do right must count upon making himself in some way a sacrifice; and it requires a firm Insight of Belief to look beyond the veil which covers all the eyes and most of the hearts of men. The crown of Right-doing awaits the end of the battle; and that comes only with the end of life. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death."

Under no less conditions can the Moral Law, as

given in our human nature, establish its lawful supremacy. It is, by right, universal. In this life neither the All, nor even *our* All, can be subject to its sovereignty. It is a transcendent "Must-be." Therefore, its true going forth, conquering and to conquer, we now see through a glass darkly.

Yet the conquest is sure, if the Moral Law hold true and firm. In this way only can that Law be realized to our joy. We that go from step to step, from struggle to struggle, and from strength to strength, shall appear before God, the Judge of unnumbered moral conflicts and degrees of strength, —and we shall appear in Glory! In a glory more resplendent because it throws a clear light upon our troubled course overpassed, and shows us the future promise of being holy, as the Object of our adoration is Holy. In this way can the Moral Law be realized,—and in one other way: by the achievement of the needful condition, that everything opposing, and exalting itself as *adverse* to uprightness and true holiness, shall pass away and its memorial perish with it.

And when these two conditions are accomplished, there subsists nothing to hinder our unending progress in all we desire most—in all we love best. Hindrances are placed beneath our feet. Above our heads, above our eyes, above our hearts, is an Ideal of Perfection, absolute and sublime: beautiful without change; attractive to eye and heart; satisfying, yet not satiating, for ever and for ever.

That the Moral Law does really command us to

keep this line of Progress, and that its command contains a Prophecy of Future Retribution, I shall hope to make yet more evident in my next Lecture. We shall see, I trust, that it postulates and receives a supplement of religious Realities.

LECTURE VI.

MAN'S INNER LAW AND LIFE.

LECTURE VI

1 Peter ii. 17.

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

THIS text tells us to honour the King, as one to whom honour is due. To fear God with that dutiful fear which is the beginning of wisdom. To love the brotherhood, because the Members of Christ are one body corporate. But *why* to honour all men, unless the very fact and being of Humanity carries in itself some claim to superiority, some cause why we should pay honour to each member of the whole family of Mankind?

My last Lecture assigned reasons for a vast specific superiority of Man compared with the beasts of the field which are put under his feet. And the more we proceed to examine Human Nature, *in itself*, and by comparison with all *lower* nature, the more plainly shall we discern that it claims, or ought to claim, a supremacy of honour *now* in this inhospitable life; and *hereafter*, with greater absoluteness, in a sphere less unfavourable to human aspirations.

Yet it is not surprising that men should fear and hesitate when there appears proffered to them

an eternity of Good. Questionless, when life and Immortality were brought to light by the Gospel, Christianity might easily seem too good, too happy to be true. And so it is with the evidence divinely inwoven into our Human Nature, and telling us of a Reality far beyond our present grasp; compared with which the passing scenes through which we now live on, are but as a shadow and a dream. Both these *opposed* thoughts grow upon us all with growing years. The tissue of the Past looks more dreamlike; the Future is seen to be our *essential* existence. Yet, as a future *for us*, it appears far transcending all that has been germane to our past doings, all that it befits creatures like ourselves to expect. Even a glimmering hope of such great happiness seems too good to be true.

The same natural doubt has made most persons pronounce Optimism as remote from truth as Pessimism. Human Perfectibility has appeared a baseless vision. This thought must certainly be resigned, if coupled with the idea of an ever-continuing, ever self-developing, Earth-occupying Humanity. Had there been no Natural Science reasons for expecting change in the outward Universe, incompatible with this idea, other reasons of a stringent kind would prevent our so theorizing. Every such theory is a forgetfulness of human ignorance,—and something worse still. It is a mistake which overclouds what is *per se* reasonable and clear, by the annexation of what is dim and disputable. Worst of all, it is the *com*-mixture of two disparate thoughts; the

fusion of a moral certainty along with a physical condition necessarily uncertain.

Moral Truth comes to us as being in its *own* nature uncompromisingly true. The "ought" in Morality is as distinct as the "must" in mechanical Nature. The Moral contradictory of Right and Wrong is as absolute as the logical contradictory of True and False. It is no less certain that Right and Wrong can never coincide, than that two parallel lines if produced to infinity will never be made to meet. There are "internal and opposite angles" in the Ethical sphere, wide enough to determine an eternal separation of the two courses infinitely prolonged. In this world, that which we ought to choose, and that which we ought to eschew, are set over against each other. Both are given us as objects of contemplation, together with an *internal* evidence that both are always to remain apart, always to continue irreconcilable. Why Evil should have been set over against Good at all is (as I have observed) an enigma unsolved. And its solution must wait till we know whether all the stellar systems are inhabited; whether Evil exists in each or all of them; whether spiritual influences can travel from one stellar system to another, even as light travels; and whether the present condition of our own small planet is a rule or an exception,—a continuing or a transient shadow. It may be that we now dwell in the lazar-house of the Universe; that our meagre developments and mournful strifes are (so to speak) spectacles to spiritual powers in

high places. That when our own inward vision becomes from earthly dross refined and clear, we shall see this world's Evil, as a black drop in a translucent ocean. And that, relatively to our individual selves, Good may be a manifest and a final victory; sin effaced by Righteousness; mortality swallowed up of Life. God grant it to us all! And may we all pray for it!

The President of the British Association concluded his Address, at Belfast, by comparing himself and his audience to streaks of morning cloud, which must melt into the infinite azure of the Past. Poetically understood—and understood as he meant it—of the artificial education and attainments of Man, the comparison is just and true. But I am glad to use it as the foil and antithesis to *another* thought. My contention this morning is that Moral Being can *never* melt away,—that it is *in*effaceable. Once risen into clearness, we cannot plunge and drown it in the twilight Past. It is onward-looking and upward-looking. If it were not Prophetic, it could have no present vitality. But it is a child of Hope,—a plant having its blossoms in the future. We may accommodate the poet's words to its *vernation* now:—

"These flowers, as in their Causes, sleep."

By-and-by they will be unfolded; and *then* no one will doubt that their life is sprung from the eternally Beautiful, and is imperishable,—

"Bright Effluence of bright Essence increate."

We now come, in order due, to a most important point. Any speculative difficulties which may have environed the apprehension of Moral Distinctions as *axiomatic*, will probably be found to rise from one or both of two causes. The former cause is a limitation of philosophic method, more or less untenable. The latter consists in a process something more than limitary. A practice of setting up artificial departments of thought and knowledge, and then *isolating* them. A practice sure to extend itself over every realm of Thought, and afterwards over our thinking Powers themselves. As if Human Reason—one and indivisible—could first be disorganized and next be treated as a sort of confederate Republic: a psychological United States,—each State a separate Dominion, and the several States sometimes at peace, sometimes in antagonism amongst themselves.

Both these causes of difficulty coincide in producing a false Method of philosophic procedure. They are, therefore, well worth examination. The primary Ethical beliefs in which we are specially interested must at all times be *gainers* by every fair enquiry into the Conditions of human certitude. Errors of Method are incidents never unlikely to befal scientific men; and from them to be propagated downwards till they become rooted as vulgar errors. To find out where science misleads the people, is always an endeavour useful *per se*. It shows the truth misrepresented in its truest light; sifts away any chance error attached to its representation by friendly advocates; joins again the divided cycle of Reason; links thought to

thought, insight to insight, belief to belief. Now, this cycle of Reason is broken by ill-conceived Method more fatally than by any other cause.

That the Moral contradictory of "ought" and "ought not" should share in the difficulties common to all Practical philosophy, is quite natural. That it should encounter difficulties arising from the dislike of men to be self-controlled, and to believe themselves responsible subjects of Retributive Justice, seems also natural. But that its difficulties, *quoad* the grounds on which it is based, or the tests which ascertain its truth, should be out of analogy with the rest of our human knowing and believing, does not appear a thing to be naturally expected, *prior* to investigation. A remark this, which introduces the question—How has this point turned out *after* investigation? It is certain that no such difficulty has ever prevented some of the greatest thinkers our world has seen from asserting the *absolute* truth of Moral Distinctions, upon grounds which must be held valid, provided that any philosophy, or even any knowledge beyond registered phenomena, can be held attainable by Man. Thinkers of this class give, in point of fact, a well-earned primacy to Moral truth. They assert that it, above all other kinds of truth, clearly brings to light those wide principles upon which the whole arch of our Science reposes. Indeed, it is this very width of their own circumference of vision,—the broad sweep of their arguments,—which have made and still do make the conclusions of those deeper spirits unfamiliar to speakers and writers in

general. To fly round the vast circuit of philosophy, is as hard as to exchange our limited cosmical conceptions for a view of the Universe which surveys the stellar heavens, the dark spaces, and cloudy star-dust of the skies. For some minds, it seems an equally hard task to accept the truth that our Earth is not really the centre of all worlds and all systems; nor yet Mankind, (its half-civilized inhabitants,) the cynosure of all reasonable creatures.

Let us illustrate this state of mind by comparing the Past with the Present.

Three centuries ago, certain men found it very hard to alter *their* conception of the Universe. And instead of trying to fly round the vast circuit of philosophy, and penetrate the stellar heavens, they stopped their ears, and consecrated their obstinacy by the names of Orthodoxy and Infallibility. To say that the Earth moved, or that the Sun, (not our globe,) is the centre of our own small system, was Heterodoxy — Heresy — Death! It cost Giordano Bruno seven years of life—it led him to the stake at Rome. Such was Papal Italy. Here, in England, amidst the summer-bloom of her poetry, and the dawn of a new scientific era, our Oxford Hooker complained of his age as "weak in brain." Yet; has the nineteenth century found a *wide* philosophy any *easier* than did the sixteenth? The tendency of our day is to specialize labour, to departmentize business; and Science has obeyed this secular law. Hence, improved means of research in each several specialty. But, hence also, a way of looking at all human

culture from limited and particular points of view. Each larger division of Science claims to have a method of its own,—and every worker in each field has a natural faith in *the* method he understands best. The Law of Jurisprudence and Civil History is a very different affair from the Law of a Physicist or Biologist. Neither are mechanical and dynamical Laws coincident. So far, no harm is done. Nineteenth century Bigotry begins with the next step; —and, as may be anticipated from the character of our age, it is a Bigotry more scientific than religious. Take an example common to many thinkers. Of late years the word "Force" is a favourite subject with writers and speakers. It is used as a convenient description of a good many ideas extremely distinct, and occupying contrasted provinces of Thought. Force may mean a mechanical law in operation; it may describe some observed energy of vital dynamics; it has also been applied to the Volitional activities of Man.

Now, a word will always be the most readily explained, from its *simplest* sphere of employment. It is *easy* to measure force in terms of material and mechanical law,—that is, by the specific Laws *ex hypothesi* governing that portion of the Universe which lies as far distant from Human Volition as a clod of earth, a metal, or a stone, is from the genius of Shakespeare, the intellect of Bacon, or the morality of Immanuel Kant. Yet, the despotism of Method is relentless! The partial mechanist wants to rule the world of Men by Mechanism!—genius, intellect,

and morality are to be ground down under his Law. Applied to Mankind, this Law is called Determinism —another name for Fixity and Fate,—which again are names for the *Law of stocks and stones.* All that is best in Humanity is thus blotted out. But a realm of unvarying Physical Uniformity is the *exact Contradictory* to our infinitely variable and varied human activities. The very conceptions are mutually exclusive. Michael Faraday was moral: a clod of earth is *un*-moral. A man who commits intentional murder ought to be hanged; but suppose a large stone falls by the law of gravitation, and kills half a dozen men, there is, really, no ethical good in hammering the stone to pieces. Physical law knows nothing of Virtue or Vice;—yet to be virtuous is to be humanly right. And Human Rightness implies a Law of Choice exceedingly *different* from Gravitation. To put his Law of Choice into moral movement,—to be that law unto himself,—is the noblest aim of Man. The endeavour,—the very idea of endeavouring,—is an exercise of Volition. The *endeavourer* obtains praise, because he is not driven, as a machine is driven, when he does his human work. He does not rise above earth in like manner as a stone cannot choose but rise, when it is hurled upwards from a catapult. The thought of a Moral ascent was realized before his inward eye, ere yet it was chosen by his Will. We praise his Ideal: *he* discerned it to be good and noble, because it was Right. Afterwards he did his best to attain it.

History verifies, on a large scale, what individual

experience tells us concerning the Law of Moral Choice. Whole communities share in this same insight; and the oftener they act upon it the clearer does the Ethical element appear. Convert the singular moral noun into a plural; add to the word Right the letter S. For Rights, social and political (the progeny of Right), whole hosts of men have suffered. Rights of thought, of person, and of conscience;—*not* Utilities because they were felt to be useful,—but Rights because they were felt to be right. Not right for each individual sufferer only; for his class, and for the age he lived in only; but Rights undying,—the world-wide Rights of Man. Above all others, those Rights without which men cannot exercise their Man-like birthright of Moral Choice. And these are Rights for time, and for eternity.

Whatever Theory may, or may not say, the verification of History is express concerning the great fact that Mankind has found true Manhood in this energy of Moral Choice—this constancy to Rights domestic, social, and civic. Amidst all the ignorance and savagery of ancient Rome, its ancestral code of Law (the religion of the State) was (as we are sufficiently informed) the life-blood of old Roman vigour. In the strength of their self-control and self-devotion, the Romans won their greatness. In the decline of that moral strength, they lost it. To hold fast the Manlike Law was to rule the world. They became slaves themselves when they let it go. Along with it all was lost. Honour, public virtue, home Rights; and every personal Right of free

action, speech, and thought. The Epicurean and the Stoic were products indigenous to those wretched times. It mattered little which of these two philosophies a man professed. Destiny and Chance,—a *fluent* and a *determined* world,—are exactly the same thing, when he can no longer aspire to an Ideal, assert a Conscience, or rule the current of his life. In other words, his Chance-existence *is* his Destiny. He must take what comes; therefore—*carpe diem*. He must live as a dog lives; so he may as well snatch, like a dog, what he can.

A noteworthy fact amongst the realities of life is thus explained. Any terrible despotism, such as that of the Roman Cæsars,—most terrible because most immoral,—has a similar effect upon human beings with *atheistic* Fatalism; unreal enough in other respects, but still a Fatalism which loosens the bonds of Responsibility and annihilates our belief in Retribution. The caprice of passion in its lowest forms is the one chance-existence natural to those who live under outward tyrannies,—tyrannies which bind Volition from without. The inward tyranny of Fatalism destroys the very idea of Volition *from within*, and, therefore, lets loose the same caprices and passions in their worst and wickedest shapes. Fury and sensuousness, in turn, lead to a despotism, as more cities than Paris can testify. These forces both act and react: under a Roman despotism the natural production was a Petronius; from the licentious creed of French Fatalism issued naturally French Cæsarism. And the end is not yet!

It is thus that the logic of events confirms the conclusions of a broad philosophy. There is no cause why an axiom underlying Moral truth should not be as validly axiomatic as the first principles of Mathematics, Natural Science, and the art of Analytic reasoning. To deny one primary belief, is to throw doubt on the reality of all. And it is equally clear that a denial of those *consequences*, which follow the *individual* character of each axiom, is to shake its foundation. For example, the first principle of Nature's uniformity *postulates* a Sequence equally uniform, extending throughout the whole sphere of Nature's operation. This has been called the method and model of Nature; and when construed by us to our understandings, it is shaped into the method and model of Natural Science. But we have seen that, whereas the Law of Nature's Uniformity is a "Must be," the *human* Law of Moral Right issues in our "Ought to do." The method and model, therefore, of human activity is not uniform, but *administrative*, and, therefore, variable. Adapted, that is, to the Right and Wrong of the diverse trials and perplexities of life. For the rule of Right, whilst absolute, is *not dead, but living.*

We see how true this is, in a moment, if we figure to ourselves what may be an impossible Unreality, yet conceivable by Theorists; a confusion, that is to say, *between the two spheres.* It seems strange to any one who examines first principles that such confusions are conceivable; but we must waive

the difficulty, since they have been actually conceived.

Suppose, then, we extend a moral law of Human Nature over inorganic Nature: the result is gross Anthropomorphism. Suppose we extend the laws of inorganic Nature over Human Nature: the result is an *un*moral Mechanism. Were any one to make his life an endeavour at working out the method and model of Nature, his life would become a *human blank*. "If," says Mr. Stuart Mill, in a discussion of the so-called practical maxim of "conforming to Nature,"—"If action at all could be justified, it would only be in direct obedience to instincts, since these might perhaps be accounted part of the spontaneous order of Nature; but to do anything with forethought and purpose would be a violation of that perfect order." But *without* forethought and purpose, where is Morality? Nay, more,—could Art, Civilization, Society, exist under such a servitude? "If," continues Mr. Mill, "the artificial is not better than the natural, to what end are all the arts of life? To dig, to plough, to build, to wear clothes, are direct infringements of the injunction to follow Nature. . . . . All praise of Civilization, or Art, or Contrivance, is so much dispraise of Nature,—an admission of imperfection, which it is man's business and merit to be always endeavouring to correct or mitigate." * Need we be surprised when, from these premises, Mr. Mill draws the inference "that the order of Nature, in so far as unmodified by Man, is

* *Three Essays*, pp. 20, 1.

such as no being, whose attributes are justice and benevolence, would have made, with the intention that his rational creatures should follow it as an example"? A little further on he writes, "In sober truth, nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing one to another, are Nature's every-day performances." And, again, "The order of Nature is constructed with even less regard to the requirements of justice than to those of benevolence." *

These sayings of Mr. Mill's deserve careful consideration; and, in my judgment, convey some very wholesome lessons. But I must guard myself against a misconstruction. The feelings of gloom and fear with which Mr. Mill regards such facts, are not the feelings which they inspire in my own breast. It seems to me undeniable, that (as Mill speaks) "the ways of Nature are to be conquered, not obeyed—her powers are often towards Man in the position of enemies." † But *why* should we grieve that our earliest incentive to a study of Nature's laws, and an imitation of her processes, is the desire of fighting her with her own weapons, overcoming her inclemencies, and guarding ourselves against her vicissitudes? To this very encounter a first utterance of the Old Testament had evident regard:—"Replenish the earth and *subdue* it." The law of the natural world is a rule of iron; but the Will of Man can either break or bend the strongest iron. This fact he learns in his battles with Nature's

* *Three Essays*, pp. 25, 8, 37. † *Ibid.* p. 20.

Titanic powers. Some he makes his servants; others he turns aside or evades. From both kinds of contest he learns energy, and the maxim—

> "——Vitanda est improba Siren
> Desidia."

It is also quite true (as Mill remarks) that the earthquake of Lisbon spared the righteous no more than the wicked. It would have been a miracle, not a natural fact, had so just a discrimination occurred; if, that is, the law of Nature's Uniformity had been metamorphosed into an *administrative* Law paying regard to Right and Wrong. In truth, the theme "is something musty,"—one gets weary of the immoralities charged against this same earthquake; they were sufficiently celebrated long ago by Voltaire and by Goethe. Their real lesson is the sensible one—that, in choosing the site of cities, it is wise to avoid the paths of volcanic streams or showers, and the currents of underground vibration. It is evidently *unwise* to trust (as some citizens have trusted) to the relic of a patron saint.

We learn a further lesson from Nature's *un*-moralities. We will not call them im-moralities, with Mr. Mill—since they are not transgressions of the Moral Law; they are simply *blanks*, where Morality is unknown, because incongruous as well as impossible. On this account, the Natural Law forms a direct and instructive antithesis to the Law of Humanity. Instructive, I say, because the opposition throws into high relief the rule of what we "ought to do."

Were those men, upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, sinners above all the dwellers in Jerusalem? But should not *all* be special sinners,—sinners above others,—against whose life the Magistrate beareth not the sword in vain? Nature's Law can make no distinctions; it is un-moral, because it is fixed and uniform. Each link in her operations is fast bound to a link preceding, and so on backwards to the hidden beginning of the chain. Mill is thus perfectly correct in saying that in all things which concern Justice, Benevolence, or other Moral distinctions,—(and *these* things make up *human* life,)—no maxim can possibly be worse than to follow Nature, to adopt her Method for our own. His reason is *our* reason: Nature cannot discriminate. She cannot spare the good and punish the evil. But it is Man's *duty* so to do. She smiles upon all alike; upon all alike she brings sorrow and calamity,—heart-rending, often almost insupportable. Man's plain duty is *never* so to do. The very ideas of Nature and Morality are mutually *exclusive;* they cannot be brought together in words. We say that a Man is bound to be just, benevolent, and self-denying. Such language would be an absurdity if applied to Nature. The absurd consequence is voided by the impossibility of the application. Man is, also, bound *negatively:* he must be neither unjust nor ungenerous. But, except in a figure of rhetoric, who speaks of Nature as "*injusta Noverca*," or styles her ungenerous and harsh?

Mr. Mill does, indeed, allow himself the use of such phrases. He stigmatizes Nature's "habitual

injustice,"* and her "most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice."† He also animadverts upon the perfect and absolute recklessness of "Cosmic forces." He states the truism—and, indeed, it is very true—that a question between two men is quite a different thing from a question between a man and a natural phenomenon. Hence any one would be justly rebuked, "who should be so silly as to expect common human Morality from Nature."‡ True, indeed! *How*, then, can we be *positive* that Nature *made* Man? —made him in his actual essential being, Morality and all? Might we not expect from the Parent of a race which can reckon many moral heroes, some slight regard to the elementary principles of Morality —such matters as human children know? Or, if the real Mother of the Gracchi and of Aristides pays no deference either to established rights, equitable dealing, or merciful forbearance,—no, nor even to ordinary justice towards individual men,—yet might she not respect Utilities? Is there no movement towards Morality, however remote, to which we can look, for restraining her Immoralities? Mr. Mill evidently knew of nothing at all likely to promote even the commonest decencies of life! He says, in a despairing tone, "All which people are accustomed to deprecate as 'disorder' and its consequences, is precisely a counterpart of Nature's ways."§

Such being the case, is it not just possible that *not*

* *Three Essays*, p. 35. † *Ibid.* p. 29. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 28.
§ *Ibid.* p. 31.

Nature, but God, made Man? Made him a Person, while He left Nature a Thing? A Being possessed of Will and Reason, contrasted with a mere machine? A Moral Cause, and not a link in Nature's un-moral chain? Again, I refuse to call that chain im-moral; the latter word suggests that Man *and* Nature are, in some sense, measures of each other.

Mr. Mill's language might easily raise this idea. He personifies Nature, and writes of her as a malignant Goddess or a barbarous Roman Matron:—

"Hoc volo, Sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas."

He describes, at length, "hideous deaths such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed." "Such," he says, "are Nature's dealings with life. Even when she does not intend to kill, she inflicts the same tortures in apparent wantonness." * Yet he might have granted her the virtue of *Patience.* To yield us food, warmth, and shelter, she submits to be placed under the plough and the harrow, under hammers and axes of iron; to be hewed, burned, and blown to pieces in every conceivable manner!

But enough has been said, I hope, to show you how incommensurable are Man and Nature; how disparate their spheres; how far apart natural laws, invariable, necessary, immanent, from Man's Causal powers, determinable in *more* than one direction, spontaneous, acting upon things outside him; and also (what is of infinite importance) acting upon and

* *Three Essays*, pp. 29, 30.

modifying his own original character. Without these he would be un-moral and irresponsible. Putting aside the *ab*-usive employment of the word Immoral, together with its connotations, there seems nothing in Mill's statements which the most temperate reasoner can deny. We cannot be said *really* to tyrannize over Nature, any more than Nero tyrannized over the timber and marble which he built up into his golden house. Neither does Nature, in sober truth, *give* us food, fire, clothes, or shelter; we (as Mill might have said) *wrest* them from her! In plainer language, we put Natural productions to very reasonable uses.

What, then, is the true teaching of Mill's Essay, thought over during a period of from ten to twenty years of philosophic life, and bequeathed as a dying legacy to the world of letters? It brings us, in fact, more than a few lessons,—and all are of a grave and important character, well worthy serious attention. No doubt they will receive this attention in due time. There will be a gradual subsidence of the horror and amazement felt upon the discovery that Mill had stepped so far into the circle of Theism: that he had actually believed in the *Potentiality* of a Divine Being* who, though mediatized in respect of His Sovereignty, is still, in a *supra*-natural sense,

* The inexplicable fact called *Matter* is in Mill's Philosophy nothing more than a Possibility of Sensation. (Compare *post* Lecture VIII. *init.*) His "potential" view of the Divine Being must therefore be considered a rather strong affirmation; and so it seems to have been understood by his mal-content disciples.

Divine. Disappointed Atheists will recover from the shock of finding that Mill allowed to this idea a possible influence upon human hopes, lives, and hearts. Controversy on such topics will die away; there will be a lull, a hush, a silence; and then it will be more calmly considered what *consequences* are involved in this view of Nature. The force of its author's moral indignation, his determination to personify, denounce, and detest the smiling, immoral Syren, will give point to each epigram, and render its impression indelible. And the welcome which has been accorded to this Philippic—its acceptance by so many schools of thinkers—cannot but interest a multitude of admirers in making its lessons plain.

Let me mention one or two of those lessons.

1. No one will, henceforth, presume to say that Nature is in itself the *model* study of Man. Experience here coincides with the anticipations of philosophy. Our commerce with Nature has been a warfare in which we have *used* laws we knew she could not break, as arms and instruments against her domination. When we want to contrive a new thing, we correlate with our ideal object some power of hers, either as it is, or as we mould it. We turn a portion of her force into a fresh direction, just as a miller turns a brook to work his water-wheel; just as an inventor gets steam from water itself, or elicits an electric current from a combination of natural factors. These things, and a thousand other things like them, make up one kind of human study. So, too, the taxonomy and behaviour of inorganic forms,—of

organized vegetable products, the habits, the instincts, and the laws of the Animal Kingdom. But, if these things alone were to be our study, the *highest* spheres of human life would have vanished. Where would be our Sociology, Politics, Civilization—the whole *educational* sphere of our existence? Lost, together with everything which belongs to justice, truth, benevolence, and other elements of Sociability! If, in the arts of life, we had followed the rule *naturam sequi*, we should (as Mill remarks) have remained naked, and subject to all kinds of inconvenience. If in our social, that is, our strictly human lives, Justice proceeded upon maxims gained from that other rule *naturam observare*,—we should (to borrow another remark) bite and devour one another. In all these ways it is plain that the Humanity of Man's world is founded upon principles not contained in Nature, —antagonistic to her laws, and far transcending all she does contain, and all she ever can attain. Let *this* disability be clearly apprehended, and a world of fallacy disappears.

2. Mill's Aspects of Nature show, further, the futility of any *approximations* between Man and his half-conquered enemy, drawn from theoretical Anthropogenies. These cannot soften down the contrasts between Nature and Human Nature. No amount of supposed metamorphosis can get over a difficulty, the stubbornness of which consists, not in an hypothesis, but in a fact. Could it be imagined that Man was at any time *like* Nature, he would not *then* have been Man; but something else. Yet, he

never could have *really* been like her; the difference must have always been world-wide. Habit to Man is second Nature,—but you cannot habituate a stone into falling upwards. He is capable, she incapable, of Moral discipline and discernment. He is teachable, she unteachable; he educates himself; she cannot be educated even by him. Compare the features of this antagonism as you will, the characteristic which makes Man *human* is educability and self-educability. Man can find sermons in stones; but were he to preach for ever to stones, he would fail of persuading them never to kill the innocent. We learn the truth of all this very strongly from Mill's maleficent volcanoes, earthquakes, and inundations.

3. Another unfounded hypothesis receives a similar death-blow. What possible pretence can remain for assuming that Man, from the contemplation of Nature, will create a Science yielding an exact account of her and her ways,—discover a law that rigorously directs her disorders, injustices, cruelties,—and *when* this is done, arrive at the further discovery that he has, in doing this, created the only true science of HIMSELF? Nay,—more monstrous still: that what he has always conceived, and does still conceive, to be the *true* science and law of his own nature and his own world, must be set aside by reason of his incapacity to read himself aright. He has (it seems) a correct eye for the Natural world—that Thing with which he is in polar antipathy; he has none for the only Being known to him by Sympathy—the inner Being presented hourly

to his own introvertive consciousness. Yet such are the assumptions of men who, having spelt Force into the letters of a language adapted to stocks and stones, would persuade us that this is the only Force known or knowable—the *one* Force supreme over a machine-made universe of Men!

The truth is that such systematizers write and discourse in one groove, till speech dominates over thought. They mistake a form of expression for a reality of Being. As Mr. Herbert Spencer* truly says,—

"The interpretation of all phenomena in terms of Matter, Motion, and Force, is nothing more than the reduction of our complex symbols of thought to the simplest symbols; and when the equation has been brought to its lowest terms the symbols remain symbols still."

"But," writes Professor Huxley, as if with a designed comment on Spencer,—

"But the man of science, who, forgetting the limits of philosophical enquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by Materialism, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician, who should mistake the x's and y's, with which he works his problems, for real entities;—and with this further disadvantage, as compared with the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic Materialism may paralyse the energies, and destroy the beauty of a life." †

Happily for Humanity, our Nature revolts against becoming a kneaded clod. To use Bacon's words, "A sparkle of our Creation-light, whereby men acknowledge a Deity, burneth still within." ‡ And

* *First Principles*, sect. 194.

† *Lay Sermons*, pp. 160-1.

‡ *Meditationes*. "Of Atheism."

from the instance of Mr. Mill, we may estimate how great a matter that little fire kindleth.

Were natural laws and forces the whole world of Nature and of Man, whence came that Moral Force, exerted by Mill, to *vilipend* the unmoral law of Disorder? Why this appeal against Nature, and Nature's method, to a judgment founded on sentiments and principles peculiar to the Mind of Man? Every such appeal lies from the less to the greater; —and Man, in judging Nature, pronounces her inferior to himself. He distinguishes, with Aristotle, between natural necessity and moral Will-power; and he cannot be made to think that the distinction is untrue. He knows it through the very same strength of axiomatic insight, through which he knows Nature herself. For it is by virtue of such insight that Man's Reason—one and indivisible—instead of chronicling natural events as things that come like shadows and so depart, assimilates them into the Code of Experience. And this code, by the value of its practical *efficacy*, becomes the verification of his assimilating insight.

This same account is exactly true of all primary Beliefs; and of the processes founded upon each and all of them. Each Axiom—like the axiom underlying Induction—is a first-ground in Reason preparing the path of experience, and prescribing the *methods* of observation and of science. Man applies the same process to that special axiom underlying Moral truth, —and frames the code of Conscience. This code, in turn, verifies his assimilating insight, just as the

code of Experience is a verification of the Inductive principle and its consequences. And the Moral Insight of Man, together with his code of Conscience therefrom educed, receive (conjointly and severally) a *further* Fact and History verification, wide as the past progress of Humanity. For we may feel quite sure that our Moral sense would never have been spoken of as the creature of Civilization, if it had not shone out brightly as the distinctive characteristic of civilized human beings. In this respect, the code of our enlightened Conscience, with its moral Contradictory, antagonistic, unbending, and irreconcileable, must be allowed to stand in favourable contrast with the wider generalizations of physical philosophy, which (as we saw in my last Lecture) are unverified, and in their own nature unverifiable. They are (in brief) hypotheses, deriving such probabilities as they possess from analogical reasoning; whilst the *reality* of Moral distinctions, in all their breadth and sternness, is a conclusion drawn in a manner precisely similar to the strongest results of purely Inductive science.

Nature, then, cannot be esteemed Man's model study. Nor yet is there a shadow of reason for supposing that his knowledge of Nature can be more exact than his knowledge of himself. Neither is any Philosophy of Nature, however strict, more rigorous in its method, or more capable of becoming our highest or ultimate philosophy.

Mill's righteous anger against Nature's immoral ways thus leads to the inference that he did not

acquire his morality from Nature. Nor, again, from anything *commonly* understood by the name of Utility. He does not say Nature is useless or hurtful,—he charges her with Injustice and Immorality. The charge is anthropomorphic in the highest degree, and proclaims its own birthplace in the stronghold of Moral insight, the one human distinction which fixes a gulf between Man and the whole world of un-moral existence.

Our Essayist does more than get angry: he breaks out into loud lamentations. Neither in his sorrow nor his anger can I pretend to agree with him. They would both be true, both rightly placed, and under (not over) painted by his energetic language, in one case, and in one case only. You will guess what I mean: that one case is, if this world were really and indeed our All. Were the world we inhabit the whole created Universe, or else a full, true, and significant type of the whole Universe, we should act reasonably by joining Mill in his denunciations of failure and sorrow everywhere—the vanity and vexation of our globe, of the Cosmos of Man, of all things and all Beings supposable. Were it really thus, no words could be too strong to express our sense of the misery and misplacement of such Hearts as throb with the desire to *do* good and to *be* good,—of such Minds as deem nothing so lovely as Virtue and Holiness. Neither could anything be less germane to the Spirit that burns within us, than to admire the ideal of Perfect Truth, Righteousness, and Beneficence, and to strive after a

sphere where a Sovereign Will, so choosing, so ordaining, shall rule visibly supreme. As the facts of life now stand, these hearts, these minds, these spirits, distinguish the excellent of our earth and race. They help us to realize the Apostle's precept, "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." They help us to realize it, I say, by bestowing upon us a living image, an actual exemplar, of those glorious things. But were this world our All, the lives of these men would be a *madness*. Or, again,—were this world a place of peaceful joy, and not (such as it is) a world of sorrow, chastening, and discipline, the Saintly life would become *impossible*. We should lose the most beautiful object our Human Form enshrines. The heathen could say, "A brave man struggling with adversity is a feast worthy of the Gods." We can, with stronger insight, say, A *holy* man penetrated with a deep sense of what the world affords as blessings,—still more of what the world can never give,—with a full knowledge of the drawbacks, the disappointments, and the enfeebling trials which beset Humanity,—cherishing within himself an unquenchable desire for that thing which human nature in itself has not—longing after the fruition of a spirituality alien from mere flesh and blood, and earnestly (oh! how earnestly!) striving to attain the same,—a man such as this, is the legible solution of the world's enigma

—an embodied prophecy which all who run may read. The dark things of Life become light in him, and a hidden better Life is plainly and ascertainably manifested. And if he be one in a long succession, a follower in a mighty train, confessing himself unworthy to tread in the footsteps of his Leader, the Author and Finisher of his Faith, how changed does the outside world appear—how transformed this tale of our daily doings and sufferances, —above all, more solemn than all—how transfigured is Death!

Let us suppose, for a moment, that instead of maintaining a Canon of Morality absolutely true, independent, and of intrinsic value and vitality, we were to accept an egoistic Expediency, or what has been called the waveless position of Scepticism. How altered all would be! Saintliness of character we should no longer venerate or love. Humanity would be discrowned. We might as well be alone in a world where nothing could remain to excite our best nature,—to raise, refine, and ennoble it. The very bonds of our tenderest friendships and affections must be dissolved. Each Epicurean might say to the other,—

"Thy Duty? What is Duty? Fare thee well!"*

And suppose we found ourselves thus waveless and unimpassioned, what would our every-day existence be worth? David Hume (in his "Sceptic") describes the outcome of it all. "In a word," he says,

* Tennyson, *Lucretius*.

"human life is more governed by fortune than by reason; is to be regarded more as a dull pastime than as a serious occupation; and is more influenced by particular humour than by general principles."* The elder Mill's opinion is given by his son, thus: "He thought human life a poor thing at best, after the freshness of youth and of unsatisfied curiosity had gone by. This was a topic on which he did not often speak—especially, it may be supposed, in the presence of young persons; but when he did, it was with an air of settled and profound conviction." †

So, too, the Westminster Reviewer of the younger Mill writes:—"To the *élite* of the human race, life is perhaps preferable to non-existence." ‡ The same strain of thought runs through Gibbon. Every deeper-thoughted sceptic says, with Tennyson's Lucretius:—

> "I often grow
> Tired of so much within our little life,
> Or of so little in our little life." §

And surely *most little* it is—most unworthy of all that is pre-eminently styled Man, if—and only if—it is not the Prelude and the Overture to a nobler, higher, lovelier Life than this.

Yes; let me speak plain truth: I do not, cannot agree with Lucretius, Hume, or Mill. I should be sorry—nay, desperate—if this world, however beauti-

* *The Sceptic*, last paragraph. (G. and G. iii. 231.)

† *Autobiography*, p. 48.

‡ *Westminster Review*, Jan. 1875, p. 17.

§ *Lucretius*, as before.

ful to eye and ear, however useful when subdued and used aright, could be in *any real* sense the hope and home of Man. He is, with all his faults and failures, capable of a better, holier, happier sphere. The gulf between him and all other creatures demonstrates, by its depth and width, the fact of his capability. And remember that (as has been truly said) it is not the Descent, but the Ascent of Man, with which we have to do. The very *ideas* of Moral Science, Natural Religion, Supernatural Religion, are so many signs and indications. They could never have existed, were not Man a creature capable of the most exalted Transfiguration. Had this terraqueous globe been a sphere appropriate—not disparate—to Man, how different would have been his past history, how different his aims, endeavours, and self-discipline now!

The human Soul whose thinkings are above the Moon, is in truth more great and grand than mountains, landscapes, earth and air, land and water. It is worthy to remain in being when Nature waxes old, and when our species disappears from her present surface. And the value of this Truth is in price beyond rubies. For what, in all the material Universe, is a just and worthy exchange for a Soul?

This is the one warm Thought which Mill characterizes as a Hope, without venturing to term it a Belief. As a Hope, he advises us to cherish it, for the sake of its manifold benefits and blessings. Its living presence will vivify and keep bright our affections, and make us more good and useful to our

Race. Further: it is this same appreciation which distinguishes the meditative from the shallow sceptic. Hume (says his best biographer) "was no propagandist; and indeed seems ever to have felt that a firm faith in Christianity unshaken by any doubts was an invaluable privilege." * Thus, when deeply moved by his mother's death, he explained to his friend that, notwithstanding his metaphysical speculations, he did not in other things think so differently from the rest of the world as was imagined. Of Hume and others, who have *nevertheless* argued out and printed un-moral or irreligious speculations instead of their own best practical convictions, it may be said emphatically,—

> "The evil that men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones."

I remember hearing Dr. Liddon ask in this pulpit, concerning Christ, "*Where* is He now?" If we asked a *like* question concerning Hume and other such writers, could we confidently answer that they are now with Christ?

* Burton's *Life of Hume*, i., p. 293.

LECTURE VII.

GROWTH, TRIAL, AND TRIUMPH.

LECTURE VII.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 26.

"THE LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROYED IS DEATH."

THERE is no thought in the whole Bible which lays hold of us more than this one. Death is a Power, strong over all powers of Life or Energy, of Possession, Pleasure, Pastime; more cruel still, over many of our hopes, aspirations, loves, and sympathies. From this war there is no discharge. Few of us march cheerfully up to encounter the onward advance of Death.

Yet there have been periods of the world when Death seemed the only Friend left to men and women. How true this was of the times at Rome under the early Cæsars, most of us know from the Latin historians or poets, and all may read in the pages of Dean Merivale. Those were days not to live in, but to die in. All sorts of people—rich men, philosophers, nobles—felt them so, and acted on the feeling. The cause needs little explanation; it is clear that Morality was (so far as human rulers could compass it) simply annihilated. The early Roman Empire is one orgy of wine, wickedness, and blood. We see in it what orgies do for Mankind. Perhaps similar scenes have seldom been thoroughly de-

scribed, unless we name the decaying Despotism at Byzantium; the rule of certain Popes; and the spectacles enacted during two French Revolutions.

Will such times ever come over again? It would be rash to prophesy. Before Rome was ultimately demoralized, the Saviour of Mankind had dashed Himself against the world of wicked Men, and they had cast Him out and killed Him. Suppose Religion—not revealed Religion only, but Natural Religion also—should be hated and cast out of Men: suppose the very thought of Immortality and Retribution denied and vilipended, would this new putting Truth to an open shame bring back the old tale of Sensuality and of Sin? Then must all incense to God be extinguished; then must Man cease to be Manlike and become simply bestial. Then would Death once more become Man's solitary refuge.

Yet there is one aspect under which Death will always continue the Enemy of Mankind. The shade of Death seems to cover all. We cannot see *through* the thick darkness of that veil. Friend after friend departs; their voices die away, and we seek to clasp their Forms in vain,—even throughout our dreams, in vain!

Death is thus the tyranny of Nature over Human Nature. The destruction of Death—the assertion of a victorious Life—is the defeat of the Physical World, and the triumph of Humanity. And all real progress towards the final consummation of our Race can only be effected by a gradual and growing realization of this transcendent principle of Life.

To examine Man's Moral Nature, with a view of ascertaining what promise it gives of this glorious consummation, has been one chief business of these Lectures. In doing this, I have dealt with what may be termed the *Dynamics* of Morality: a very different subject from systematized Ethical rules. This course has been dictated by the reason of the thing. In the physical world, its provinces of vegetable and animal life inosculate through their *lower* forms. A rose in her summer pride resembles neither an eagle nor a lion. But how hard it may be to class the primary shapes of life, those well understand who are acquainted with the past history of *Volvox globator*, and the Order of Desmidieæ; or who study the modern Monera. In purely human realms of knowledge the case is precisely the reverse. It is the *highest* maxim of the Moralist, the noblest aim of the man who strives to be moral, which immediately *underlies* the upgrowth of Natural Religion. The σχοπὸς πράξεων—the *reason* why we should truly live a moral, that is, a human life—may aptly be likened to the sunrise-spot where earth and heaven seem to blend. Or we may say that it is at once the key-stone of our arch of Duty, and the foundation-stone of our citadel of Faith. Thus the loftiest reach of Man's Present, inosculates with the lowest phase of his Coming existence. The most developed form of his earthly Humanity is the chrysalid stage of his metamorphosis. The *Larva* cannot at once give birth to an Imago.

This highest Maxim of Morality has been often

described as our Being's Aim and End—as Happiness—as Human Excellence and Perfection—as the true and proper Work of Man. It is likewise spoken of as the basis of Ethical Method: and so it must be, in the same sense that the finality after which our Will strives is the basis of our action. In the Ethical syllogism, just as in the Volitional syllogism, this highest finality forms the major premiss, and gives character and coherence to every practical conclusion.

The same Maxim is again spoken of as the *sanction* of Morals—the "Why" we must do our Duty, and the reason inclining and assisting us to do it. In this point of view I endeavoured to place it distinctly before your mind's eye in my second Lecture. I also attempted to show you that there are cases in which the "Why" of action can alone determine the "How." The particular case we took was one in which every consideration was ranged against Truthfulness and Heroic Virtue, save and except the *absolute* antagonism between Right and Wrong, together with the Belief by which such a conviction is inevitably accompanied. We believe, and cannot but believe, that the objective Truth of the Moral Contradictory becomes imperative at all costs, *because* its "must be" necessitates *infinite* consequences. In other words, because its empire over us is ended *neither* by Death *nor* yet by a life of isolation. How true this is, will be evident if you contemplate the lot of a man cast upon a desert island, without hope of rescue. Ought a person so

circumstanced to ferment the fruit of the grape, and become a drunkard? Ought he to stoop to any kind of pleasure purchased by self-debasement? Ought he not to watch over his own purity in body and in mind? Should he not keep his heart with all diligence, since out of it are the issues of Life? But, suppose that Happiness were thought of as something *possibly* apart from Duty,—or that Duty were disconnected from the laws of Retribution: could any code of conduct maintain its supremacy in solitude? No thought of general interest, praise, sympathy, or other social ties, can bind the isolated man. And must not the same relaxation of Duty ensue whensoever our human life becomes *divided* from other lives? Each lonely spirit that dwells apart would inhabit an un-moral sphere. The hour of Death would, to many of us, weaken that innermost Life, which ought then to put on its brightest bloom and beauty.

The same perplexity is of no uncommon occurrence. Never, probably, has there existed any human being who did not at some time or other ask, "Why" *must* I do right? If you examine any supposable answer to this demand, you will see on what account the "Why" is so immensely important. For example, is it likely that a questioner reluctant to do right, or at best half-unwilling to be convinced, would feel *satisfied* with Utilitarian persuasives? Might he not rejoin, "You say Right is advantage and praise to myself—advantage also to my race; but I am ready to risk applause, and some future

interests, for the present pleasure before me; especially since its loss would entail a present pain. As for Mankind, my contemporaries will take care of themselves: so, too, will Posterity. Rational benevolence may (as you think) be virtue; but I do not feel my present happiness promoted by it; neither do I see any reason for the sacrifice." * This rejoinder, if men spoke their real minds, would no doubt be frequently heard from their mouths. Mr. Hume pointed out the difficulty, or rather impossibility, which *he* felt in dealing with it.† And we may plainly see that on his system, and all similar systems, the failure of philosophy is complete. It must fail before every such opposing attitude of mind, because it possesses no power of reply.

The truth seems to be, that every *noble* Utilitarian takes the desired attitude for granted. His method deals with finding rules of duty rather than reasons why we should do our duty. In this respect it may be contrasted with most *systems* of Ethics, both *præ* and *post* Christian. In this respect, too, appears one of the strongest contrasts between Intuitionism so-called, and the highest phase of Utilitarianism. In

* Compare Hume's dictum before referred to: "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger." *Treatise*, B. II., 2, 3—"*Of the influencing Motive of the Will.*" What Hume means is, of course, that Moral Choice is not founded on our Reason, which he had just remarked "is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions."

† "My philosophy affords no remedy in such a case, nor could I do anything but lament this person's unhappy condition." *The Sceptic.* (G. and G. iii., p. 222.)

this respect, finally, the Method seems to be less a method of Morality than of *Casuistry*. It is busy with cases of doubt; it tests rules of action under diversities of circumstance. But it fails in giving to a man, doubtful yet not dishonest, *reasons* for endeavouring to elevate his life and character. In fact, very many Utilitarians have considered the alteration of character an unpromising, if not impossible task. Thus, Hume, who at times concedes a good deal to the influences of education and society, lets drop the mournful observation, that "the fabric and constitution of our mind no more depends on our choice than that of our body." * To the higher Morality we have been advocating, the main *business* of Life is to *mould* this fabric and constitution. The whole duty of Man may be summed in self-education. He is bound to this task by the supreme Law of his Nature—a Law on which depends his highest development now and Hereafter—a Law which thereby necessitates consequences inconceivable in magnitude, and in duration immeasurable. The "Why" here is absolute, and *therefore* sufficing.

Turn the matter in whichever way you will, its practical issue always must come to this:—Is there, or is there not, a *satisfactory* reason why a life of Duty, irksome to most men, and with certain trials for all, should, at this cost, and perhaps at much greater cost, be accepted and consistently pursued? Do Utilitarian methods of Ethics, or does any other method short of *objectively-true* Morality, state any

* *The Sceptic.* (G. and G. iii., p. 221.)

such conclusive reason? Mr. Fitzjames Stephen examines this issue. "No such statement," he says, "of what Mr. Mill calls the ultimate sanction of the morals of Utility is possible."* Neither can any such prevailing statement be made, unless the moral sanction contains a distinct ground for belief in a certainty of Retribution. Speaking of the doctrines of the existence of God and a future state, Mr. Stephen observes,—

"What does surprise me, is to see able men put them aside with a smile as being unimportant, as mere metaphysical puzzles of an insoluble kind, which we may cease to think about without producing any particular effect upon morality."†

A few pages further on he adds,—

"We cannot judge of the effects of Atheism, from the conduct of persons who have been educated as believers in God and in the midst of a nation which believes in God. If we should ever see a generation of men, especially a generation of Englishmen, to whom the word God had no meaning at all, we should get a light upon the subject which might be lurid enough. Great force of character, restrained and directed by a deep sense of duty, is the noblest of noble things. Take off the restraint which a sense of duty imposes, and the strong man is apt to become a mere tyrant and oppressor."‡

Perhaps I ought to remind you that the Atheism here spoken of need not (as Mr. Mill truly wrote) consist in a dogmatic denial of God's existence: the denial that there is *sufficient* evidence for Theism amounts practically to much the same thing.

We are now in a position to place in antithesis with what has been said, the fixed security of that

* *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 308.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 309-10.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

sanction and basis of Morality which is, (as we have maintained,) the one fact required for the *certitude* of Natural Religion. Our fairest way of doing this, will be to show that it really does furnish human beings with a sufficient "Why" for performing their duty at all costs. And thereafter, that along with the "Why" it shows the "How" of duty. It yields (that is to say), if honestly accepted by the conscience, a guidance in moral action. If acknowledged, it gives rise to principles of conduct altogether invaluable. No method of proof can well be more reasonable than the one just proposed,—no test more severe.

When we speak of the secure basis and ultimate ground of any Truth whatsoever, we evidently describe something *more* than a subjective affirmation within our own souls. We speak of a Something, which is not born with us to die with us, but which abides strong in our decay, and continues, whether we are or are not. An *objective* validity of this kind is implied and posited by every First or axiomatic Truth. The "must be" of Natural Uniformity could not stand as a real "must" unless universally valid. If an empirically general rule, it would admit of exceptions;—and who could say whether the event under examination might or might not be a chance exception? Hence miracles would cease to be miracles; gravitation and its kindred forces become bare probabilities; the whole superstructure of modern science, a *possible* theory and no more. Imagine, in like manner, the moral "ought to *do*"

valid with anything less than a validity which overpasses change and death: what is it, O struggling fellow-thinker, to thee or to me? If we are to obey, under adverse circumstances, a sovereign rule—to live and die by it—the tenor of its law must contain, (like the law of Induction,) a plain *assertion* of its Universality. Nature would not be Nature, were she not the embodiment of undeviating Law. Morality would not be moral, unless *immutably* imperative and *objectively* absolute. And in this fact all who acknowledge the real supremacy of Duty, in whatever manner they may apprehend methods, or subordinate maxims, must always *ex animo* coincide. Obedience, to be morally obedient, must be grounded upon *some* valid insight of knowledge or faith,—or of both in unison.

Morality, *objectively* supreme, constitutes the asserted claim and essential meaning of Retribution. This law of Justice consists neither in a gift unworthily bestowed, nor yet in a penalty arbitrarily inflicted. The law of Habit realized is, perhaps, our nearest example of its Retributive operation in this life; and gives us a very clear idea and illustration of the *modus operandi*. Its final accomplishment is the normal and legitimate *out*-growth of the Moral Law, which, subjectively active during years of change, becomes, when events grow ripe, objectively manifested. Could it be otherwise, the very idea of a Moral Law would, even now, be subverted. Duty might (that is to say) remain a Moral *persuasive*,—a belief which (like one of Hume's physical beliefs)

we might keep *if* we liked it. But it would not be a moral LAW,—a rule to be obeyed through all losses, toils, sufferings, sorrows, and self-abnegations. A rule to be disobeyed, at the proper peril of each evil doer; not without warning in the very moment of disobedience, that he thereby ensures his Soul-degradation. The operative nature of such a Law is that it exists as a moving, working, principle. If left to its proper energies, it quickens and ennobles; —if tampered with, and sophisticated, it enfeebles and kills. And this is what those writers really mean, who describe Morality as founded in the Nature of Things. To be Morality at all, it must be naturally supreme over Man's practical destinies, just as the laws of Truth are naturally supreme over each possible development of his speculative Reason. In both cases, the ultimate outcomes may be inconceivably immense; but, in both, they must be the normal and necessary issues of our present germ-state. Otherwise, speculative truth could not *now* be true, and Moral distinctions would be unpractical; and therefore *un*-Moral.

The Moral Law is thus, in its operation, a pledge and earnest—in its essential nature, a transcendent prophecy, of its own finality. As a living movement, or germ, it *foretells* the beautiful flower and blessed fruit of perfection to be borne by every righteous soul: for every wicked one, the out-grown freezing shadow, the poisonous life-destroying produce. And this twofold energy of Law corresponds in its consummation with the twofold Judgment of God,—

"Who," as the Apostle tells us, "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."* The correspondence may be, in fact, infinitely more exact than any of us can *at present* apprehend. A bird, after issuing from its shell, puts on an outgrowth of perfected plumage, and becomes winged for distant flights. So within the soul of Man there may be (and probably are) *latent* powers and senses capable of what we should now call superhuman development.† And this may be most true of that most

* Romans ii. 6-9.

† That such latent powers really exist is thought by many persons to be sufficiently demonstrated by phenomena such as the two following examples. They are certainly very striking, but not so alien from experience as may ordinarily be supposed.

"A relative of mine," says De Quincey, "having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death . . . . saw in a moment her whole life, clothed in its forgotten incidents, arrayed before her as in a mirror, not successively, but simultaneously; and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part. This, from some opium experiences, I can believe; I have, indeed, seen the same thing asserted twice in modern books, and accompanied by a remark which probably is true—viz., that the dread book of account, which the Scriptures speak of, is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual." In a note he adds: "A process of struggle and deadly suffocation was passed through half consciously. This process terminated by a sudden blow apparently *on* or *in* the brain, after which there was no pain or conflict; but in an instant succeeded a dazzling rush of light; immediately after which came the

certainly Human distinction—the Moral sense of Man. In this world, Man is the solitary creature who *knows* the happiness of an approving conscience, the realities of Remorse and Moral desolation. That which is now most distinctly human may become, in a higher state of our being, most pre-eminently superhuman. Some such anticipation is reasonable, and correspondent with the pictures of Revelation. For the righteous shall, we are told, be endued with a spiritual body and a likeness visibly Divine. In *whose* image and likeness the wicked shall appear, is not equally declared. Perhaps we could not comprehend an explanation.

solemn apocalypse of the entire past life." *Opium Eater*, last ed., *sub fin.*

The second anecdote is recounted by Mr. Wendell Holmes, in his little work entitled *Mechanism in Thought and Morals.*

"A. held a bond against B. for several hundred dollars. When it became due, he searched for it, but could not find it. He told the facts to B., who denied having given the bond, and intimated a fraudulent design on the part of A., who was compelled to submit to his loss and the charge against him. Years afterwards, A. was bathing in Charles River, when he was seized with cramp, and nearly drowned. On coming to his senses, he went to his bookcase, took out a book, and from between its leaves took the missing bond. In the sudden picture of his entire life, which flashed before him as he was sinking, the act of putting the bond in the book, and the book in the bookcase, had re-presented itself.

"The reader who likes to hear the whole of a story may be pleased to learn that the debt was paid *with interest.*"

This second example does not seem to have fallen under Mr. Holmes' personal observation; but it so happens that I have myself known more than one similar instance. No reader will feel much surprise at such occurrences, who peruses the accounts of "Unconscious Cerebration," given by Dr. Carpenter and Miss Cobbe.

At all events, this silence seems conformable to the general tenor of Scripture, which partly veils the unimaginable horrors of Man's Second Death, whilst it allures him to the Fountain of Life, and draws him upwards with the bands of Love.

It seems to be by a gentle process of steadily-developed life within us, that the "Why" of duty is converted into the "How." At first, the supreme axiom of Morality rises up before our consciousness in a very abstract shape. Formal, apparently,—and nothing more. Yet it cannot live in human souls a single day, without subsuming under itself a quantity of the raw material of our ordinary existence. The like power appertains to other Formal aphorisms. Any man who carries in his mind the Logical principle of Contradiction will see *material* incompatibilities of Thought, where others see persuasive arguments. Just so with the Moral Contradictory. He who intelligently accepts it will decide that many a course of action is not right, but wrong; in respect of which others discover no Wrong and no Right whatever. And his decision will bring with it a sufficing certitude.

Thus Practical Morality depends, in every-day life, on the firm grasp of a few sovereign principles, generated from the axiomatic First. These are (so to speak) the Moulds or Forms into which Experience builds us up. Such a belief as that Moral distinctions appeal to a *different* internal sense, from questions of taste, of interest, or of pleasure, is a key which unlocks many a door in Doubting

Castle. Invaluable, also, the maxim that bodily appetites are, in their own nature, far lower than the benevolent affections and the intellectual desires. Or, again, that those impulses which tend towards individual well-being are not to prevail over the broader impulses which (instead of regarding Self as the main object) stretch into a disinterested promotion of true national or world-wide good. The love of God (which to a believer crowns all other duties) cannot be paralleled with *this* kind of disinterestedness; for how shall a Man profit Him? But it lights up within us a burning desire to do that which we acknowledge as well-pleasing in His eyes; and He is *the* Personality in Whom all our ideas of Goodness, Rightness, and Holiness meet. To love Him is to transcend the standard and criterion given us in our own lower Personalities; and to endeavour after a standard and criterion unspeakably sublime. We lose self, to gain a spirit divinely elevating,—a Life which is the Light of Men.

Some measure of occasional doubtfulness respecting our *precise* duty,—such uncertainties as crowd books of casuistry (*ductores dubitantium*),—yield in reality a very wholesome discipline. Nothing will safely guide us through many dim questions, except an earnest and single-hearted desire to do Right. The longer we live, the clearer this fact becomes to us. It grows upon us, along with the growth of our Moral Insight.

The insight which thus dissipates our doubts can,

indeed, never remain dormant, inexpansive, or unproductive. We have already likened a First Truth to a Germ within the soul of Man, possessing a definite type of growth, and a structural Law of its own. And this is a fair similitude, provided we always connect with it the remembrance that soul-growth is a far more subtle and complex process than the growth of corporeal organisms. To some minds, the same thought may seem clearer, if we compare the movement of our supreme moral maxim with a *Rhythm* pervading our innermost soul-sense. Most of us know by experience how the rhythm of a poem or melody evokes or harmonizes ideas. For example, when Coleridge heard Wordsworth's recital of the Prelude, he described it as

> "A song divine, of high and passionate thoughts
> To their own music chanted."

And when the Poet's voice had ceased, he thus depicts his own feelings:—

> "Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
> I sate, my being blended in one thought—
> (Thought was it? or aspiration? or resolve?)
> Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound:
> And when I rose, I found myself in prayer."

Few of us, probably, have ever listened to a piece of really great music, without finding that a multitude of images appeared unbidden before our mind's eye, moved on with the moving rhythm, and took order and harmony from its "linked sweetness long drawn out." Generally, under such influences, thought

glides after thought more easily, and with a more than accustomed excellence and grace. Even so is it with the Moral Truth daily pervading the Soul of a good man. Often, very often, latent impulses or feelings, never before fully placed in the light of consciousness, spring out into life and beauty, because touched by a spiritual Harmony. The human being feels himself more truly human, more onward, upward-tending: stronger, wiser, better, nobler. And this, invigorating, this vivifying power, becomes by that glad experience a conscious development of Moral insight, and at the same time its convincing verification.

Suppose, too, that in some such moment of Moral Progress we awake to a deeper introspective vision, and see down into dark places of unloveliness and disharmony, long concealed within ourselves; nay, possibly still lurking there, profoundly hidden beneath and away from the upper wave of our holier, happier life. The fact and truth of this discovery is in itself the evidence of a Light which makes darkness manifest, and reproves it. And the reality of the moral dissonance creates an internal longing after a more soul-subduing Harmony. It is, we know, in self-knowledge, self-chastening, and consequent endeavour after self-elevation, that we find the most distinct witness of Humanity to its own Moral nature, its future progress, and its final destinies.

Hence it plainly appears that an indispensable condition of soul-growth is a strict and purely moral

Maxim. Let Hedonism, Egoism, Expediency, take the form of maxims shaped and leavened by the practical spirit connoted by those words; let the underlying "*Ought to do*," with its moral force, be omitted, and the Hedonistic, Egoistic, Utilitarian thought be substituted in its place. Could the effect upon the soul be the *same?* Our mental rhythm and melody being changed, must there be no correspondent change in what it awakens? This is the real danger of the systems thus named and classified. We know that it is possible to *moralize* any of these systems by subsuming its rules of conduct under a pure Moral Maxim. In that case, the greater good, the perfection of ourselves and of our race, lawful joy, true happiness, are just so many tests used on occasion, in estimating the greater or less rightness of some possible line of action. So understood, subsumed, and limited, they may be quite in place. But the danger to *us* lies in a possible eclipse of the *lumen siccum* of Morality. Thoughts of profit or expected happiness do not, *per se* (that is, by a self-evident ethical meaning), *harmonize and moralize the Soul.* And this seems to be the absolute amount of truth contained in the *dictum*, that he who pursues virtue for the sake of happiness will never be really happy, because he can never attain virtue. And, as I reminded you in my second Lecture, very different thinkers appear to meet on this common ground. From the whole discussion, we may draw the safe conclusion that true Ethical progress depends upon our holding fast the ultimate

Maxim of pure and independent Morality; upon its presence as a source of movement within the Soul; and on our conscious acknowledgment of its final and absolute supremacy.

In truth, this urgent and practical point is made equally clear by the Scriptures and by the Law of Morality. God, we are admonished, is a jealous God. Chemosh must not stand near His Altar;—we cannot serve both God and Mammon. So, too, is Moral purity *exclusive*. It is useless to be half-hearted. If we wish to obey the law of Righteousness, we must place its Ideal before our inward vision; we must study its lineaments, and acquire an eye for its lights and shadows. In this way our mind's Eye will be brightened with a faculty Divine. But the eye which is sharp for self-interest is dimmed for Moral insight. A *complexity* of Motives betrays the sincere heart, and corrupts living Truth in its fountain. We all of us have felt the undeniable charm of singleness of purpose: it is simplicity, not complexity of character, which constitutes the talisman of influence over good and earnest spirits. And where this charm co-exists with a cultured manifoldness of intellect, even *half*-good people are not altogether insensible to its sweetness; so that the poet was right in penning as his finest eulogy,—

> "In wit a Man, simplicity a child."

This line does but echo our Lord's combination of the Serpent and the Dove; and of such a character (not yet extinct in Oxford) each of us may feel ready to say, *Sit anima mea cum illo!*

You may see this principle of moral exclusiveness, and its divine jealousy, in a clearer light if you reflect that there is one phase of our baser human nature, not so uncommon as one would wish, but utterly incompatible with all Moral rightness. I mean the vice of Malevolence. We observe it often as that ἐπιχαιρεκακία which Aristotle classes with shamelessness,—an evil altogether exclusive of Good. In its worst and most developed shape, it becomes that voluptuous delight in cruelty which was anathematized by Mr. Mill. So odious, so diabolical, does this wickedness appear, that the very fact of its existence and temporary rule in the world we inhabit—(a rule as possible in our age as it would be detestable) —forms one of the strongest *single* arguments that, unless Conscience be a lying spirit and Humanity a disharmonious failure, there must be another life after Death, where the balance shall be redressed, and Malevolence bound in chains for ever.

This argument—very strong, as we have said, in itself—appears *infinitely* strengthened when we consider how vile, before an Eye of Absolute Purity, must appear the many incompatibilities with Good which most of us allow to deform our own lives and characters. Thus, whilst we dispute on the outside questions of revealed religion, we forget how antagonistic even to Natural Religion are many things which we scarcely reprehend. They *are* antagonistic and deserve condemnation, because instead of raising our moral sensibility they lower and debase it. To practise them, is to become worse, not better men.

And if this test be true, we may easily conceive how repulsive they must appear before the eye of a Being Whose nature is perfect holiness, and Whose exhortation to us is, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." In His sight, the things which Natural Religion teaches us to shun must be altogether hateful. How utterly irreligious, then, and alien from His truth, appear any forms of Christianity so-called, which in effect may reconcile a sinful life with impunity from Sin's deserts;—immoral habits with an assurance of sharing the future happiness of the Good! Tried by the test of Natural Religion, such tenets are adjudged to be what English Churchmen pronounced them long ago—dangerous downfalls, fables and deceits.

To this test St. Paul appeals in a number of well-known passages. He employs it as an argument against the inconsistent Israelite. Surely, then, it binds with increased stringency the conscience of every inconsistent Christian. Those here who have read the sermons of St. Chrysostom, will remember how frequently and how forcibly he reasons from the same premises. Man is cited as a witness against himself. Out of Man's mouth is also drawn a witness for the Spirituality of true religion, and for the truthfulness of the Divine Idea,—the purity and holiness of God. Just as the Law given by Moses is a schoolmaster on account of its teachings and its threats, so is the Law written on our hearts a schoolmaster by reason of its upward tendencies and promptings. It contrasts the God Who "dwelleth

not in temples made with hands" with that Godhead which is likened "unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."* The same inward Law has also its self-condemning judgments, its ineffaceable fears and hopes, beliefs and aspirations.

This law of Natural Religion is, therefore, a safe companion and guide, when we try to find some thread leading us through the mystery of our earthly existence to the Spiritual Temple and presence of God. If we wish to demonstrate to ourselves how vast the difference which such a guidance may make to us,—how elevating, and at the same time how chastening, such a companionship may be,—the easiest and surest method is to turn our eyes from things as they actually are, and try to conceive what they might be, could our most sublime *human* ideas be realized in the order and arrangement of a whole wide world. A world strictly human, but reflecting our noblest human Ideal. Such ideal worlds are not unknown in the writings of the Mystic, nor yet of the Philosopher.

The Chancellor's Essay for this year is on "*Utopias Ancient and Modern.*" Let us, now, try to figure for ourselves a more distant Utopia than any across the ocean-wave, where sleep, in golden light, the flowery islands of the Blest. Let us, for a few moments, task our imaginations by leaving this earth, sea, and air behind us, and find our newly-figured home beyond the circuit of planets, and the influence of our familiar Sun—beyond what Man's

* Acts xvii. 25, 29.

unaided eye reveals—amidst cosmical spaces, where vapoury matter is being condensed into young Morning Stars,—habitations as yet uncelebrated by rejoicing Sons of God.

Suppose, then, that we could stand by and witness the evolution of a new material orb, physically conditioned *like* our own. That we might see it, not only "as Gods, knowing good and evil" ourselves,—but like giant-Gods in strength, and having some influence on the process of world-formation. Suppose, too, that we are able to watch its changes with sleepless and immortal eyes. The incandescent sphere is cooling fast; and vapours, which floated round it, are being precipitated. They descend upon its surface, a hot—almost a fiery—yet, now, a liquid shower. Heat is being transformed into various modes of motion, visible upon the surface of the mass. *Here*, are mighty fissures; *there*, mountain summits. Seas and oceans are poured together. Mists rise, and rivers run. Time passes, and beneath the tropical atmosphere we behold long winding vales,—

"With sudden green and herbage crowned."

Below them are reedy marshes; around, the Palm and Tree-fern droop, and wave their foliage. A sunrise is refracted into its thousand tints over a world of vegetable luxuriance; and Day, with parting glow, delays amongst the evening clouds, till a browner shadow falls upon the woods. Stars beam in the solemn firmament above; and, nearer than they, is a companion Globe, rising, setting, and always shining

on its way. There is indescribable beauty in the solitudes of Space; there is beauty also in our fresh bright world, its solitude and its silence too.

But how shall a sentient being, such as one of us, be *satisfied* with a realm where all is voiceless, passionless, hopeless? We long for life, thought, emotion, activity. And can a world of *animal* existence satisfy our longing? Look: here are diversified Forms which feel and move. They run, swim, fly,—and every muscular exertion is accompanied with a sense of power and gladness: nay, even to live is a kind of bounding joy. Each gratified instinct is, to each creature, its own appropriate delight. Watch them as they pass over fields, through forests—in air or in water. Every movement seems beautiful and bright. Yet, instinctive existence has its changes. The pleasures of animal life depend on irritable structures subject to wear and tear; and, therefore, menaced by approaching Death. But the menace brings no forboding fears to the unprophetic creature. Its suffering, though sometimes sharp, has no precedent terrors—no thought of the Probable, or the Inevitable.

Take a purely instinctive world at its highest, and you cannot rate it higher than this: it is a mode of existence which has its enjoyments and its drawbacks—its beauties and its blots. But the worst blot—the ugliest drawback of all—is that it fails to image and pursue a Life nobler and better than its own. The life of Animality contains *in itself* its own Beginning and its own End. There is in it no

solemn *preluding* upon heart-strings, which vibrate with under-tones of infinite depth; and oft-times of infinite sweetness.

We desire, then, a world of Moral Being. Neither do we relax our desire, although we must acknowledge that, just as physical enjoyment cannot exist, in the animal world, without much suffering, so Moral goodness cannot, amongst finite creatures, be realized without many sorrows. We do not relax our desire, because we see that a world of stocks and stones is, in our sense, no world at all; nor yet is a world of animal pleasure and animal pain any world to our truly human thought and apprehension. Still, it may be wise for us to count the cost.

Morality, we know, cannot exist without choice. To ask whether Choice must be free, seems nearly the same as to ask whether Choice is *really* Choice. But let our Spontaneity, (that is, our faculty of Choice,) be affirmed,—does it necessarily entail as a consequent our probable or possible wrong-doing? Behind Choice stands Motive; and Motive is, on each occasion, the movement and expression of Character. The question, then, arises, Can Choice be free, if Character is fixed? Fixed, not as essential, absolute and infinite Goodness; but by something which acts as a *determining* limit upon and around its finite principle of Good. To answer this question, let us pay a closer attention to our nascent world and its conditions.

The globe before us revolves in its glorious sun-

light, its gentler star and moon-beams, so easily as to *simulate* freedom,—yet so *certainly* as to guide us to the fact that its motion is determined by unalterable laws. It is beautiful in its natural aspects,—those aspects which Humboldt loved to dwell upon. It is beautiful, also, in Cuvier's sense: a realm of animated creatures, moving and resting at their own unfettered choice,—free to be active or be still, just as their instincts dictate. But these instincts make up the character of each—a character limited, and determinate. The ravening creature, void of reason, is void of Introspection. He cannot reflect upon his own impulses to rend and rive,—upon his own nature, regardless of all other creatures' pain—

"A nature red in tooth and claw."

He cannot think of it—"*Hoc non belle.* Henceforth I will inflict, at least, no torments for pleasure: I will take no delight in the needless agonies of my prey." *Re*-formation and *Self*-formation are, to his fixed nature, impossible. Therefore, we say that he is muscularly, but not morally free. He is a creature incapable of Volition—truly and essentially *un*-moral.

The case stands, we are sure, *altogether otherwise* with Man. His work and happiness lies in the possession of an unfixed character. To condemn his own life where foul and odious, as Ruskin would condemn an untruly drawn landscape, is the right beginning of Change. The inner landscape may be blurred, but he may amend and reproduce it. To *see* the wrong, is the first step of Progress. Self-

abasement is the wicket-gate to a higher—a better path. Because Man *is* capable of such things, we say of him that, even when *muscularly* powerless, —when bound and helpless in limb and body,—he retains his Faculty of Volition. He is, by consequence, Morally free.

For this reason let Tyrants and Spiritual Despots tremble: they may chain and torture the animal frame; but the Will continues free, and therefore powerful. It is sure to react some day:—

> "He who of old would rend the oak
> Dreamed not of the rebound!"

Even so must it fare with them in their immoral blindness. His lot will be theirs.

You may glance at Character from another point of view. It has been said that Character is to Motive what *Mass* is to its component elements. But few sayings are more easy of misinterpretation. The analogy lends itself to an idea of inert or gravitating mass, *mechanically* governed whether in its rest or its motion. But Character stands connected with the individual motives of individual choice, like a *moral* rule and Sovereignty of creative power. And when we say moral rule, or moral sovereignty, we use a phrase of Freedom. For Moral is opposed to Mechanical, in the same ratio that a Man differs from a stone. Character, if morally paramount, is, therefore, a supreme dynamic Vitality,—a working, living Energy.

This truth is confirmed by the fact-knowledge of

our own experience. So far as we can observe steadfast, or erring men, it appears obvious that

> "He who has power to walk has power to rove."

And the same lesson is taught us in the little we are told of fallen and unfallen Angels.

By exactly the same course of thought, we distinguish between Insane crime and the madness of Criminality. And when we praise, our approval depends on our belief in the absence of compulsion. Common sense says that he

> "Who acts by force compelled can nought deserve;
> And wisdom short of infinite may swerve."

We feel it impossible to esteem that which is not a freely-rendered Good. Voluntary effort and self-sacrifice increase the estimation. The God of Israel and of David valued the free-will offerings of their mouths. His word is, "My Son, give me thine heart." For, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." The same is true of our own human feelings. We all understand that there can be no marriage with a slave. And would any *man* buy his English bride? or, if he did, would he dream that, with her, he had bought her love? We are all aware, too, that the chief curse of exalted greatness is to be *alone*—alone without the possibility of discovering when attachment is not a tinsel, but a sterling affection. When we remember these plain facts, we perceive how *deep* the moral problem lies. Among all choices, devotions, and loves, which the world

contains, the love of Virtue is supereminent. And the most excellent is, we are sure, invariably the most difficult. It is linked with the hardest conditions.

Try, then, to conceive the *least* burdensome but *indispensable* conditions under which a world can become the seat of Moral struggles and Moral triumphs.

The babe that smiles only to die, is outside the battle of life altogether. If Goodness be tried,—really tried,—and afterwards triumphant, the fact plainly implies some *pre*-existent knowledge of what is *Other* than Good—a Something opposed and exalting itself against Goodness—an antagonist of Right. Now, there are three obviously conceivable modes of acquaintance with this Oppositeness. For a good person, the nearest and most familiar is the Sight of actual wickedness, positive, practised, loathsome. Most remote is the *Fore*-sight of possible evil—such as the absolutely perfect Deity may behold afar off. Between these two, lies an Insight into practicable and probable evil—that *proclivitas peccandi* which we all are daily obliged to compare with the gross Actuality of sin. This contingency, although not realized in our own lives and actions, yields us frequent vistas into our lower natures, where we see black shadows—forms to shudder, lament, and weep over.

These three being obvious modes of knowing evil, let us consider what are the easiest terms we can make for our new world; the *lowest* sum of its

mournful knowledge, its sorrows, and its sins. Is it possible to improve on the lot of Man, to exclude the knowledge of evil altogether—and *so* to shield each higher character from temptation *that* its goodness shall never fail?

The answer to such questions may be given at once. Upon the conditions under which the world we contemplate began and grows, these suggestions are impossibilities. We set out by subjecting our World to *physical* laws. If, then, the *nexus* of such laws remains unbroken; if there exists in any supposed nature capable of Morality, a capacity also for physical pleasures and physical pains; if that Nature be allied to the animal world by bodily movements, instincts and delights,—all such problems are determined. And the *reason* is plain. The Being thus allied to animality is *not animal altogether*. He carries within himself that which makes animalized existence a sphere, not only inappropriate, but debasing. Debasing, and therefore immoral.

If you will carefully consider and reconsider this view of the position which a *mixed* Nature must necessarily occupy relatively to good and evil, you may perceive that it embraces the true elements involved in a variety of statements made by religious and philosophic men. For example, it explains that widely-spread feeling in the ancient Church, that Matter and Corporeity are the appropriate seats of Sin. It gives additional point to a thousand earnest exhortations warning us to distrust the *treason* of bodily allurement. We under-

stand why it is we endeavour to subdue the flesh to the Spirit in more senses than one. Why St. Paul brought his body under. Why St. Jerome fled from Roman dances, and dreaded them all the more because his fancy reverted to those lascivious scenes. We understand much that is meant by the religious discipline of India. We see the beauty inherent in that mystical explanation of the Buddhist Nirvana, which tells us how it extinguishes—not Humanity—but the *mixed* material blended with it: as when we are admonished that the body is the greatest of all evils, and he who has conquered passion and hatred is said to enter into Nirvana. Throughout all these conceptions of Man's burden and Man's freedom, there floats, more or less distinctly, the idea that our true life is progressive emancipation from the physical feebleness infesting Human Nature—a gradual absorption of that Something *Other than Goodness and opposed to it*,—an up-raising and blending of our Will with the Divine Will; and that this crowning phase of Humanity is its *true* illumination and its lasting joy.

Suppose a question be now asked, which has been asked an hundred times before: Can we conceive—nay, assert—the possible existence of a world from which this mixed material may be absent, and where moral natures need no purifying discipline to attain the Good and the True? This question must be answered in the affirmative. But if it be asked further, Can we say thus much of any one conceivably *given* world? we ought to reply by as

distinct a negative. The existence of such a world in *any* given sphere must needs be determined by conditions of which we are absolutely *ignorant*. It must be linked with Cosmical Laws "to us invisible or dimly seen,"—laws which, in the language of Scripture, are reckoned among the "secret things of the Lord our God." In our vision of world-formation, it would be impossible for us to take so vast a conception for granted. Neither *could* we picture to ourselves the exaltation of moral and religious happiness consequent on so sublime a mode of Being; conceivable, yet unknown to Man's experience. Whilst, therefore, we traverse in idea the skyey ocean, and pass through the stellar barriers which gird us round, we carry our *human* thought-power with us—we look on Space and its floating orbs with an unaltered human eye.

Thus seeing, as Human Beings must see, thus thinking, as Human Beings must think, we cannot but perceive that change around us, and change within, are elements in *our* sense of gladness. There is a happy feeling which would altogether vanish if we lost the Spectacle of Change:—

> "Who would be doomed to gaze upon
> A sky without a cloud or sun?"

Monotony to the eye is not more wearisome than inward monotony—a life colourless and motionless—like Mariana's at the moated grange. We all know that, without some kind of struggle, Hope would soon grow pale,

> "And Fear and Sorrow fan the fire of Joy."

For this reason we anticipate with eagerness that, beyond the grave, in yon bright world which love endears, Emotion will break upon its calm repose. Endeavour will *not* be unknown: our personal enjoyment and our warmest sympathies will be centred on our own living stir and Progress, and on the progress of those who environ us.

Elements of happiness similar in nature, though variously mingled and proportioned, must meet in the moral atmosphere of every world such as the one we have been attempting to depict. In it, as in our own world, those ties by which its highest Nature is bound to physical nature, are in themselves a sufficient evidence of Struggle crowned with Progress. Change is written on every upward gradation; and the very fact of Gradation is an assurance —or rather a visible beginning and continuance—of increased possibilities of happiness and lasting good. Throughout that world, as throughout our world, there is plainly perceptible the witness without which God has never left Himself. And within the *one* Being, who is its noblest perfection, is a Knowledge and a Power which no animal development has reached—a *new* mode of Existence different from all other and meaner things. This gift is Reason; and, compared with unreasoning nature which underlies it, *caused and not causative*, void of Will, Conscience, and infinite Insights,—we pronounce Reason to be *supra-Natural*, and the Being so endowed to have been marked out by this, his heirloom, as an inheritor of some higher, nobler Sphere.

The feeling thus made indigenous to such a world is, beyond all other feelings, Hope. A believing Hope—vast and immeasurable—transcending space, as thought transcends space—without limit of time to its own Vitality.

Yet in all worlds, of which the Law is Progress, the brightest hope and the brightest happiness must require care, culture, watchfulness. Were it otherwise, all would be *law-less.* But Law is to all creatures the assurance of a lot so far secure, that their labour will not be without reward. It is also one evidence of a Sovereign Will which has ordered the rise and progress of all things, and which still governs all. A sense of this governing influence constitutes the natural element underlying our human faith in Providence, and our reasonable use of Prayer. The degrees of the evidence itself, and the warmth of Men's faith kindled by it, have varied in different epochs of this world's history. Those here who are familiar with the opinions of B. G. Niebuhr, will remember how he loved to note those variations, and also their correspondences with great physical changes in the globe itself. Throughout other worlds, such evidence and such consequent faith may *vary* exceedingly. The more clearly the former is apprehended, and the higher and nobler the trust founded upon it, the happier will be all sentient beings who can feel that they are obeying the Eternal Laws, and that their life is in conscious harmony with the aim and finality of the whole moral universe.

On occasions of great national or personal evils,

even this very disjointed world has afforded examples of the Divine triumphs of Faith. They were expressed in ancient days by vivid phrases glowing with intense emotion:—"The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man doeth unto me." And in later times, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Such was St. Paul's consolation when the Holy Ghost witnessed that in every city bonds and affliction awaited him. It has been the Christian martyr's talisman ever since. Of this consolation Lord Bacon writes, "Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain." And concerning the want of this faith he says, "As Atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this—that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty."*

As a matter of *historical* fact, we know, from the testimony of Faith's enemies, that the strongest of human masteries have been achieved, the most unsullied human happiness has been attained, by the Life, the Walk, and the Triumph of Faith. And Faith is amongst those perfect possessions which this world can neither give nor take away.

So, too, must it be with *every* race of Moral Beings necessarily inferior in Nature to the Author and Object of our Faith. We will, therefore, desire that excellent gift of Faith for the beautiful orb we

* *Essays.* "Of Atheism."

contemplated; even as we have often desired it for those near and dear to us in this our mortal and transitory life. It is possible that other natures, subject, like ourselves, to the law of Change, may escape *much* of our sorrow and *more* of our weakness by not having added sin to sin: in a word, they may be less *self-degraded* than we are. For, in plain truth, the spectacle afforded by our species, in this nineteenth century, must be acknowledged as a disappointment to ardent lovers of Mankind. Our loss of Belief in our own higher Humanity appears, in itself, a sufficient cause of true regret. "Is it not wonderful," philanthropists ask, with Hooker,—"Is it not wonderful that base desires should so extinguish in men the sense of their own excellency, as to make them willing that their souls should be like to the souls of beasts, mortal and corruptible with their bodies?"* Like basenesses may not, in *all* worlds of Trial and Progress, have led to so vast a moral suicide. Yet, along with Faith, we will desire for other creatures of God such aids as He has given us. Wheresoever Sin is known as a Possibility, there neither Faith nor the incentives and aids to Faith can at any time be moral superfluities.

By a law of our social nature, Example and Sympathy rank foremost among those auxiliaries which lend us wings to fly withal. Hence we have learned to prize beyond measure the institution of a Society blessed in its origin, and twice-blessed in its sacred objects. Founded upon *supra*-natural belief, it

* *Eccl. Pol.* v. 2. 1.

claims the Soul of Man as an unbiassed witness for its primary moral and religious truths. The very fact of its continued existence, when all earthly things appeared against it, is another witness, at once to the Providence of God, and to the reality of His Law written on the hearts of men. It carries a still further evidence in its actual work and operation. For it *lives* by the practical assertion of a righteousness and true holiness, transcending the ordinary stature of Man's attainment. And such a present transcendent actuality can only be reached by the energy of transcendent insights.

The objects of this Society are to countervail the *regressive* forces at work in a Race not yet perfected by discipline and self-education; to maintain the noblest truths of Morality and Natural Religion, warmed and exalted by the fervour of a spiritual Life; to console the sorrowful, strengthen the persecuted, and assist all earnest souls in their Heavenward pilgrimage; to feed the flame of Divine Love within us—that we, loving God above all things, may obtain His promises, which exceed all that we can desire. We may sum all these aims and helps in *two* propositions. The first, our Liberation from Sin, that with pure hearts and minds we may draw near to the great and good God. The second, that when our *Change* comes, as come it must, we may be found in readiness for a new and higher Life—a Life compared with which our Larva-existence in this world is little better than a living Death.

Such a Society is the true Church of Christ. From

year to year, and day to day, the Church rehearses and enforces the First-truths of Natural Religion. For the seal of her ethical teaching is this: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." From year to year, and day to day, she adds to Natural Religion bright and glorious things which Nature cannot give: "what eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of Man; the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

These Church-truths, and the reality of their helpfulness, have been tested and attested by the long experience of Mankind. To pass over times of great trial, we know that, from age to age, the Love of God has thus come home to many a Soul of Man, transforming what might have been moral virtue into spiritual Holiness: a state to which (as Kant and other Moralists say) we must ceaselessly aspire, although unable to reach it by our present limited powers of self-enfranchisement. But no observer of men can doubt that the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made many Christians free from the law of sin and death. And for this cause we need not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto Salvation.

Christ's Church is, therefore, the richest of our human armouries. And wherever sin or the peril of sin, sorrow or the possibilities of sorrow, are, *there* ought we to desire for creatures, not unlike ourselves, some *similar* gift of God. In worlds such as we have pictured, circling far away throughout illimitable

unimaginable Space, we know not what trials, what temptations, may exist. Yet, in whatever form they do exist, we ought, above all things, to pray that there may the Angel of God's Presence be,—there, a like ladder of ascent to purer regions,—there, the House of God,—there, the Gate of Heaven. So shall the natural be changed into the Spiritual, the corruptible put on Incorruption, and the mortal put on Immortality. For, as we have seen, that cannot be first which is spiritual, but that which is natural,—and afterwards that which is spiritual. This is the *real law* of Development, the Divine Finger bringing strength out of weakness, and thereby perfecting praise.

For our world,—for all worlds subject to conditions resembling ours,—we know that this process of Change is inevitable. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit Incorruption." First comes the Moral endeavour; next, the sure and certain Hope; and then, the Finality. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death." And, "So when this corruptible shall have put on Incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on Immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory."

LECTURE VIII.

ABSOLUTE TRUTH AND THE SOLEMN HEREAFTER.

LECTURE VIII.

1 THESSALONIANS v. 21.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

THESE words naturally connect themselves with St. Paul's remarks on certain manifestations of supernatural power and foresight, described in the verses preceding my text. The Apostle's exhortation applies, with equal force, to all beliefs transcending nature, in all ages. Its point is, that our steadfastness in those things which are good should be based on a *foregoing* enquiry into their reality and value. It, therefore, seems appropriate to this Lecture, which must stand to all that has gone before in the relation of a short *résumé*, and still shorter supplement.

No one here will, I think, doubt that the exhortation to "prove all things" implies an appeal to our Reason. And as Reason is generally viewed under more than one aspect, and distinguished accordingly, the appeal intended will lie to what is technically called, not our Speculative but our Practical Reason. This view of the Apostle's meaning appears strengthened by his very next words, which are purely practical, or, as we might say, Common-sense. They convey that grossly neglected maxim, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

Respecting the *consequences* ensuing on an appeal to practical Reason, no persons, except those who are versed in the most abstract kind of metaphysics, can form the remotest conception. To many here, Kant's appreciation of this appeal will, very possibly, be either in part or altogether new:—

"By Primacy between two or more things connected by Reason, I understand the prerogative belonging to one, of being the first determining principle giving unity to all the rest. . . . If Practical Reason could not affirm, or conceive as given, more than what Speculative Reason might itself proffer, then the Primacy would belong to the latter. But provided that Practical Reason possess in itself native First-principles with which certain theoretical positions are inseparably bound up, and that these, on the one hand, transcend all possible insight of Speculative Reason, whilst, on the other, they do not contradict it; then the question stands thus: Shall not Speculative Reason, (which knows nothing of all thus offered by Practical Reason for its acceptance,) adopt these propositions though absolutely transcending its powers, and endeavour to unite them with its own concepts as a foreign possession handed over to it? . . . But again, if *Pure* Reason can be in itself Practical, and actually is so—a fact ascertained to us by our consciousness of the Moral Law—then it is always one and the same Reason which, whether from a speculative or practical point of view, affirms or denies according to such First-principles. Then, too, it is clear that though speculatively incompetent to establish such propositions, Pure Reason must needs accept them the moment they present themselves as not contradictory to itself, and as inseparably appertaining to its practical Interests. Accept them, with a full remembrance that they are not additional insights of its own, but extensions of its employment in a further and a practical point of view. . . . Thus, when pure speculative and pure practical Reason are combined in one cognition, the latter has the Primacy. . . For without this subordination there would arise a conflict of Reason against itself. Were the two realms co-ordinate, the former would close its territories. And we could not reverse the order, and require pure practical Reason to be subordinate to the speculative, since all interest is ultimately practical, and even that of speculative Reason is

conditioned, and it is only in the practical employment of Reason that it becomes all-sufficing." *

A single example may, however, be more instructive than many explanations. An *obvious* example is, of course, the best; yet obvious truths, thoughts, facts, and objects, are very frequently the least effectively examined. Thus, while the full Moon, rising in her splendour, attracts all earthly eyes, a field of grass seems scarcely worth observation. But the moon's beauty has for us only an Æsthetic—not a Human interest. Her lustre is reflected not altogether, as the poet supposed, from

"Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe."

It beams from a mountainous but arid desert, where, if there be Life, it exists in shapes to us unknowable. Yet I must *not* add, inconceivable. Sir Humphrey Davy's "Last Days of a Philosopher"—a book most suggestive—presents pictures of Life attaining a higher development than our own, under conditions which make such a life as our earthly existence physically impossible. We may therefore imagine, but we cannot know, such diverse modes of being.

But the beauty of a grassy meadow is its living exuberance—vegetable and animal—subsisting in shapes observable by ourselves. Every green blade, each flowering stem—the grace of its fashion, its delicate pendulous anthers waving in sunlight with perishable loveliness; each several plant, each sepa-

* *Critick of Practical Reason*, B. II., 2, 3.

rate part of it—stem, lanceolate leaves, æstivation, and floral structures—contain their families and tribes of animal existence. Few of us have ever looked closely at them; fewer still have sought out their microscopic germs and growths, sheltered within each fold and soft green channel. Very few indeed have thought, with the Laureate, that if the secret of their first life and being could be told us, we should know what God, what the world, and what Man is. Such treasures of knowledge and of mystery are laid up in the Trivial and the Obvious.

Looking, again, at grass, meadow, and moon, as objects of eyesight only, let us ask one trivial question respecting them: Do we really *know*, as matter-of-fact knowledge, that they actually exist at all? In other words, can we by demonstrative argument *prove* their objective reality—their existence outside us—prior to, and separate from, our own perceptions? Briefly, has Idealism ever been *speculatively* refuted? It is very likely that this question possesses interest for some thoughtful minds among you here present. Many will, I dare say, have at least learned *where* the difficulty of the refutation lies. It is just this. The Evidence, on which we understandingly believe the real existence of all things and objects amongst which we move, is *internal* evidence. It consists in signs and symbols addressed to our bodily senses, translated by them into a language *un*like the original impressions, and *re*-translated by the sensory which receives them through a more recondite metamorphosis still. By means of this *twofold* change they

reach that inner self which considers, compares, and arranges them, so as to make a Conceptual world of its own.

The unlikeness of an undulatory movement to what we think of as a grass-plant, a meadow, or a moon, appears very great. Yet this vibration is the first factor of Sight—the first, that is, in the order of transmission. How the wave-thrill impressed upon sensitive substances becomes rendered into colour and expansion, with all their attendant varieties and modes, must form (like many another How?) a vast problem for the physiologist. One of the most recent German writers on this subject is Helmholtz; and his enquiries result in a conclusion that the first impression is far removed by separate steps, difficult *in themselves*—more difficult in their successive *nexus*—and, therefore, very difficult and very far removed indeed from the translated and retranslated version finally presented to our Consciousness. Our human method of interpretation, he supposes to be *learned* in our childhood. In this respect, as well as in other respects, both moral and intellectual, "the Child is Father of the Man."

Further elements of the Idealistic position would have to be taken into account, were we putting together a full statement of the case *for* Idealism. But what I desire to adduce is a number of sufficient explanations, and no more. The real point to observe is the plain fact, that in all our predications, poetic, prosaic, philosophic, respecting external Nature, we are really speaking and reasoning upon a scene which

passes across the stage of our own Mental vision. *There* we see it. By rules belonging to the Mind's eye, we explain it to ourselves. Our proofs, verifications, experiments, rectifications, and exact Natural Science arguments, are parts of the same internal scenery, neither more nor less. To quote Professor Phillips—"All our facts, all realities we know, consist in *Relations*. Of *things* we know nothing; neither can we know." The great soul of many an earnest philosopher has rebelled under thoughts like these. He sees, but he hates, the narrowness of his own circle:—

"Æstuat infelix angusto limite mundi."

Yet the boundaries are *impassable*. We fly round the caging wires of our sense-impressions and sense-interpretations, but find no way of escape. They are one and all renderings of our own; but *what* it is they render, no amount of analysis—no kind of demonstrative argument teaches us. Interrogate Speculative Reason as we will, it can do no more than assure us that between the several sense-data presented to our understanding and our logical conclusions respecting them, there exists no fatal flaw—nor falsehood. Yet certain latent perplexities, enigmas, antinomies, are brought to light in the course of our argument, and these continue speculatively insoluble. Every attempt to solve them ends by making the existence of a material world less and less conceivable. Thus Speculative Reason employed upon sense-information leaves us shut

within our cage. The wings of our soul are beaten against its wires in vain.*

Concerning these wires—our human limitaries—all sorts of antagonistic thinkers and systems are at one: Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hamilton, Mansel, Mill. Nobody's definition of the material outer world has been more to the point than Mill's. He defines *Matter* to be "*a permanent Possibility of Sensation.*"† You may find this definition difficult. But can any other form of words more honestly express the fact of the philosopher's ignorance, and perhaps of yours?

Yet what does all this ignorance really mean? It would be quite a mistake to suppose that any one of those reasoners doubted for a moment the actual hard fact of a world of obstinate things outside us. What they doubted, or denied, was *our* power of demonstrating this same hard fact. They did not think that the moon was a lover's dream, the meadow a farmer's, or that the lovely grass-plants, with their microscopic kingdoms of life, were so many charming botanical and biological visions.

There is in this respect no difference between the peasant and the philosopher. But the latter is under an imperative necessity of showing *cause* for his Belief. If he fails in doing thus much, his position

* Hence the philosopher anticipates that rewarding moment—

"When we soar to worlds unknown."

Compare Sir H. Davy's intended additions to his "Last Days," in *Life* by his brother.

† *Examination of Hamilton*, Ed. 3, p. 277 seq.

is that of a thinker who stultifies his own Thought. As a Man living in a world of things and men, he accepts and acts on Natural Realism every day of his life. Neither Mr. Mill nor any other Idealist so called, ever attempted to pass through a door closed against him. But as a philosopher, the speculative sage may, and does sometimes, land himself in Nihilism. He demonstrates that the Door, though a Possibility of Sensation, is also a possible Nothingness. That is to say, the legitimate outcome of his thinking (so far as his system of Thought may be conceived) is that it yields *no reasonable* ground for believing in the real objective existence of the doors or walls, things or men which surround him.

A philosopher who rests in impossible conclusions ought to be looked upon as a self-confuted thinker. His philosophy should be held a nugatory—or, if you prefer it, a suicidal speculation. Had we leisure, it might be interesting to ask how many philosophies, considered very creditable, are really in this discredited condition. But this we cannot do.

Every philosophic thinker has felt more or less the necessity thus laid upon him. Sir W. Hamilton, for example, refers for the ground of Natural Realism to the veracity of God. This reference creates an apparent need for including Natural Theology within the cycle of Philosophy, in order to make the philosopher's system complete. And many great systematizers have held that this must be done—to some extent, at least. In other words, they have thought that an Atheistic philosophy is a contradiction in

terms,—a superstructure wanting a basis,—a Theory hanging in mid-air,—a sort of Cloud-city, fit resort for the light-minded birds, but no tower of strength in which Humanity can find a rest.

On one very important point, Kant, Aristotle, and Plato are in substantial agreement. Agreeing in this, they with one accord contradict the Sceptic, and the Empiricist, as concerns that primary assumption which underlies both doubt and "Positive" thinking. There are, they affirm, certain practical decisions of Reason which can never be gainsaid. For a true knowledge of Reality—a certitude that realities are real—the philosopher must enquire, not without, but *within*. Were there no *outside* realities, the whole *inner* Life of Man would be *unreal*. Philosophy would be no better than a phantasmagoria, because we could literally know nothing, nor have any *data* on which to reason. We must decide from the beginning, either to accept Reason, or to deny Reason. If we take the latter course, our rejection must imply, and ought to acknowledge, an abnegation of all Philosophy whatsoever. If we accept Reason, then we may cross-question Reason as much as we please, but we must not forsake our Guide by denying our acceptance. In brief, we must above all things be *consistent*.

Practical Reason *asserts* the truth of objective realities. Common sense, which is a sort of rude echo from Practical Reason, leads us all to *act* upon the assertion. Pure Morality *enforces* it. For Morality cannot subsist in an imaginary world. If the

objects and consequences of our human striving are nonentities, *we* are not bound to strive or suffer—we may be very foolish so to do. Our Moral Duty has respect to Beings. But suppose the only name declarative of Human Nature is the style and title of phantoms? Again, Duty cannot play with counters; it is earnest in regard of the *things* it chooses as really good, and of the things it rejects as palpable evils. Therefore, Duty is the direct opposite of all Nihilistic theories—all hypotheses which call in question the "must be" of Reality, and reduce the world of Man's activity to a cogitable "may be."

A short time ago I referred to Kant. Let me now quote from Dr. Mansel * a short account of Kant's position in respect of Duty:—

"The Moral Law, and the ideas which it carries with it, are, according to this theory, not merely facts of human consciousness, conceived under the laws of human thought, but absolute, transcendental realities, implied in the conception of all Reasonable Beings as such, and therefore independent of the law of Time, and binding, not on man as man, but on all possible intelligent beings, created or uncreated. The Moral Reason is thus a source of absolute and unchangeable realities; while the Speculative Reason is concerned only with phenomena, or things modified by the constitution of the human mind."

We have seen that *each* practical faculty of Man,—in other words, his Reason, operative throughout each *sphere* of practical knowledge,—cannot rest without solving the problem from which we set out.

The solution must yield us a valuable extension of knowledge, far greater than may at first sight be apparent. Speculative Reason is surrounded on all

* *Bampton Lectures*, Lecture vii. *sub init.*

sides by her own laws. They are not only her Palace, but her Prison. They girdle and close her in on every side; neither can she look beyond them. It is, therefore, impossible for her to be sure whether there is or is not, outside her prison-walls, a *real* world of Being correspondent to the world of Thought. The case is *very* different with Practical Reason. She resides where Thought and Being *meet*. Her work is in the world of Life, and the soul and substance of Life is Reality. Underlying each and all of her axiomatic principles there is a deeper and broader axiom without which practical Truth would be impossible. It is this. We *are* Realities ourselves; and we dwell in a world of Being as well as of Thought,—a world real, and crowded with very hard realities; with existences impenetrable and indissoluble by us, which we must accept together with the conditions they impose. And this acceptance is forced upon us whether we like it or no. It is an act of necessary submission to a suzerainty under which we hold the tenure of our own Existence.

Such was the *kind* of Truth which Kant said that Pure Speculative Reason must borrow from Pure Practical Reason, and add to her own territory. And the loan of this kind of Truth Kant regarded as establishing the Primacy of Practical Reason.

As a matter of fact, the laws and work of Reason, moving in a practical sphere, accomplish for the laws and work of Thought *more* than I have said as yet. They not only enlarge the domain of Thought,

but they break its bonds asunder. They show that its *antinomies* (or self-contradictions) are unreal: incidental, that is, to the Forms of Speculation, but dissoluble, and practically dissolved into Polar elements of one and the same Truth-power upon each several occasion. This is shown by the structure of Reason itself made visible to us in its Practical application. The mind of Man *becomes* polar whensoever it is *introspective*. And we exercise introspection whensoever we become self-conscious,—when we exert our Wills, scrutinize our Motives, endeavour to re-model our Characters,—whenever we think and construe ourselves *to Ourselves*, as in the higher forms of language; and in every example of that self-judgment commonly called Conscience. The same thing is shown over again, by the employment of those antinomies or self-contradictions of Thought, as working constituents or factors of a higher Unity. As, for instance, when the opposition of Subject to Object in Ontology is shown to be polar *only*,—a formal but not a real antithesis. For the reasoning Mind of Man is both a Subject and an Object too. Were it otherwise, it could not be self-contemplative. It would be wanting in the *one* true distinction between the animal and the human world. We should be Automata, not persons,—not Beings, but Things.

And this observation leads me to remind you once more, and once for all, that the Problem of Nihilism has its most complete and entire solution in the Realism of *absolute* Morality. Were *we* less than Beings, could we *in any way* divest ourselves of our

Personality, we should cease to be *responsible*. Such might in fact appear a consummation devoutly to be wished by many a man, who is

"Lord of himself,—that heritage of woe."

But it is simply impossible. Real Right and real Wrong must in that case melt away like a morning cloud. Their sanction—the "Why" we ought to do right, and oftentimes the "How,"—would vanish with them. Then the Law of Retribution must become a dissolving view—a Mirage—a *Fata Morgana*. Life ceases to be real or earnest. Its stream is a current foaming and frothing in darkness,—we ourselves even as shadows or bubbles on its surface. Who, then, could say to each of us, Be strong and of good courage, Thou Bubble! Walk in the light of Immortality, Thou Shadow! For, soon, this dim life-stream of Humanity *itself* must exhale as the early dew, or plunge down into a fathomless abyss. Thou shalt *really*—that is, Eternally—die. Soon must the poet's words be true of thee, and of every one such as thyself:—

"Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river;
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!"

Contrast with these dark enigmas the clear strong answer of Morality. Man's true Being is *real* amidst a Life of enduring Realities. And he who truly lives shall never really die.*

* Compare John xi. 26 with the Burial Service in our English Book of Common Prayer.

Thus and thus only is solved what otherwise must remain inexplicable by and for Man, concerning the Realities among which he now lives, and the real Future in which he shall survive even though suns and starry systems decline and disappear.

This, now, is the one *kind* of appeal which has been answered by a distinct affirmative. On this certitude of Practical Reason hangs all our human assurance of REALITY. It seems as obvious as it is correct, to remark that if a whole world of real existence is thus sufficiently assured to us, how absolutely safe must be the truth of that axiom which justifies our Moral Distinctions.

The *consequences* of this appeal are so vast as to baffle the estimation of all except those who know by experience where the ultimate battle-field of real knowledge lies, and where amidst the occurrents of that heady fight will be found the heat and burden of the day. Such a survey can only be made after years of acquaintance with Metaphysical enquiry, its doubts and its difficulties. But, considering the vital worth and importance evidently attributable to this last resort of Philosophy—this appeal to Practical Reason—I am very desirous of explaining and illustrating its nature and effects, so far as our limit of time will allow. And such an attempt may seem the more advisable because that revival of the Kantian method, which forms so striking a feature of recent English philosophising, has not yet embraced the whole wide circuit of Kant's system, and

the part least understood seems to be the very valuable cycle of Treatises to which I have directed your attention. The shortest and readiest way of attaining my purpose is to place the subject before you *de novo*, slightly extending my point of view, and varying its attendant illustrations. For the moment, therefore, let us put what has been said on one side, and ask afresh from Speculative Science the question which Practical Reason has already answered. Pending a reply, we may observe how immense must be the *blank* left to us, were our question fruitless. And when we find, as we are sure to find, that *one* human Truth can alone fill up the void and dark abyss, we shall think more magnificently, though still inadequately, concerning this most sublime prerogative of Man. Inadequately, I say,—because the towering dimensions of any transcendent truth can only become apparent when we have ourselves attained the sphere of its legitimate fulfilment. At present we must ask with the Apostle, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

With such objects in view, let us turn once more to Speculation, and begin again by reconsidering that same problem of common life which grass, meadow, and moon suggested to us, and which Idealism places before our eyes. Can we or can we not demonstrate the fact we feel to be so thoroughly a fact,—the outside world of other minds and other bodies—both kinds of entity to us *impenetrable*?*

* In other words, Can we decide, *by argument*, whether the things we see are actualities, or ideas and images only? If an Idealist

Our difficulty (as you have seen) is to get out of ourselves; and to show by an exercise of Thought that if "things are not what they seem," they yet are not absolutely *unlike*,—that there is in them a real objectivity,—conceivable, searchable,—for us, in some way, knowable. Put this question to the philosophies of pure Speculation, and consider their replies.

chooses to assert the latter, can we, by force of argument, refute him? On this curious question Dr. Tyndall writes as follows:—

"When I say I see you, and that I have not the least doubt about it, the reply is, that what I am really conscious of is an affection of my own retina. And if I urge that I can check my sight of you by touching you, the retort would be that I am equally transgressing the limits of fact; for what I am really conscious of is, not that you are there, but that the nerves of my hand have undergone a change. All we hear, and see, and touch, and taste, and smell, are, it would be urged, mere variations of our own condition—beyond which, even to the extent of a hair's breadth, we cannot go. That anything answering to our impressions exists outside of ourselves is not a *fact*, but an *inference*, to which all validity would be denied by an idealist like Berkeley, or by a sceptic like Hume. Mr. Spencer takes another line. With him, as with the uneducated man, there is no doubt or question as to the existence of an external world. But he differs from the uneducated, who think that the world really *is* what consciousness represents it to be. Our states of consciousness are mere *symbols* of an outside entity, which produces them and determines the order of their succession, but the real nature of which we can never know." *Address*, p. 57. By way of note to this passage Dr. Tyndall subjoins: "In a paper, at once popular and profound, entitled *Recent Progress in the Theory of Vision*, contained in the volume of Lectures by Helmholtz, published by Longmans, this symbolism of our states of consciousness is also dwelt upon. The impressions of sense are the mere *signs* of external things." Of this paper an account will be found in my *Philosophy of Natural Theology*, pp. 190-203.

Hume would tell us, in his easy way, to keep the belief if we like it. But he warns us that every man is a spectator looking upon a scenic stage—the theatre being his own mind.

Berkeley would seriously remind us, that in God we live and move and have our being continually. Apart from God, all is Ideal. We try to seize a palpable Somewhat; and grasp, not substance, but shadow. In Him alone is Reality, and, seeing All in Him, we see what really is.

Stuart Mill was in earnest, as well as Berkeley. He lacked Hume's indifference on the one side, and the faith of the Bishop on the other. We possess his latest thoughts respecting this *crux* of speculation. They are well worthy your attentive consideration. They show, with distinctness, the unmistakeable outcome of any thorough appeal to Empiricism. His way of stating the question, you will observe, is just this:—What is the value of our experienced sensations, and how far can we reason from them, and from the contingencies of future sensation, analogically? Reason (that is to say) from mental phenomena to material objectivities. In the last of his Essays, Mill canvassed the problem in these words:—

"Feeling and thought are not merely different from what we call inanimate matter, but are at the opposite pole of existence, and analogical inference has little or no validity from the one to the other. Feeling and thought are much more real than anything else; they are the only things which we directly know to be real—all things else being merely the unknown conditions on which these, in our present state of existence, or in some other, depend. All matter apart from the feelings of sentient beings has but an hypothetical and unsub-

stantial existence: it is a mere assumption to account for our sensations,—itself we do not perceive, we are not conscious of it, but only of the sensations which we are said to receive from it: in reality it is a mere name for our expectation of sensations, or for our belief that we can have certain sensations when certain other sensations give indication of them." *

Thus, then, you see Mill leaves Idealism absolute over the whole region of Speculation,—of Truth, that is, apprehended by the pure speculative Reason. Nay, more,—so far as Mill is concerned, Idealism is not only the supreme truth of our philosophy—it is also the *sole* attainable truth of our Universe.† I have put this conclusion as exactly and soberly as I can, but I prefer putting it before you again, in the deliberate words of Mr. Mill:—

"Mind," he says, "(or whatever name we give to what is implied in consciousness of a continued series of feelings) is in a philosophical point of view the only reality of which we have any evidence; and no analogy can be recognized, or comparison made, between it and other realities, because there are no other known realities to compare it with."‡

You will, I believe, agree that Mill's Idealism, or, as it has been termed, his Nihilism, is irrefragable, provided the subject be argued on Mill's principles,—

* *Three Essays*, p. 202.

† If the reader will peruse the sentences before quoted from Kant, he will see *ex antithesi* the great significance of Kant's distinctions, and of the Primacy which he assigns to pure Practical Reason.

An account of Idealism, useful as a comment on the preceding paragraphs, is given in my *Philosophy of Natural Theology*, before referred to, p. 204 seq.

‡ *Three Essays*, p. 203.

on the grounds, that is to say, of Empirical Speculation. In the eye of a dramatist, or *his* philosopher:—

> "——All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players."

So, to a speculative empiricist, our life of knowledge is a theatre; its facts a scenic representation. Any eager youth, who has passed beyond Life's green-room, and looked behind the scenery which gave him pleasure, understands how great was his illusion, and is therefore disillusionised. Even thus is it with an empirical philosopher. His first facts are transformed phenomena: but what player, what scene-painter, shall tell him where begins, where ends the transformation? Suppose we admit, for argument's sake,—and this is admitting a great deal,—that the *inward* stirrings of our soul are propagated from impacts struck by real externally-subsisting things. Who shall say *how much*, and *what* is really existent outside? How much is the effect of transformation,—or what the creation of the soul itself? Is the succession of blows struck upon resonant metal identical with the sweet low chime of those ringing Bells, remembered by us from the days of our happy childhood? It swells upon the breeze,—lives within our senses,—dies into echoes,—vanishes in far-away vibrations, floating through waves of air innumerable. It is, perhaps, lost amidst an ethereal ocean, undulating over unthought-of Space. A metallic blow, and its repercussion, formed the cause of each tone: but were they *very* like that dream-drest melody of evening bells? Not much more, probably, than the chime

itself resembles the feelings, fancies, emotions, memories, which mingled with the sound. And *what* resemblance has it, we ask, with those undulating thrills, prolonged indefinitely beyond our human ken?

As concerns this instance, the ringing bell appeals to *ear* in the same way that meadow and moon appeal to *eye*. And the problem which Idealism raises, in regard of this and other commerce between our perceptive powers and the outside world, is, as we have seen, unsolved by Empirical reasoners,—just as it was unsolved by Sceptics. Nor does it appear possible that any kind of *pure speculation* may, at any time, hope to solve it. The only answer that ever has been, or (as it would seem) ever can be given, is that of our Pure Reason; pronouncing *à priori* its decisive judgment, in a Practical sphere underlying all human argument, and also immeasurably transcending it. Upon such axiomatic judgments, all human knowledge rests. Without them we neither know, nor are able to know anything.

But we carried our instance of sound further than our example drawn from eyesight. We transferred melody to mind. The sweet Bells awoke the echoes of Sovereign Reason. With them blended the softer emotions of the soul. And this sympathetic alliance holds true in fact. Bell-music,—a childish pleasure always, sometimes a passion of youth,—is, even now, to some of us an artistic pursuit, or a science of mixed mathematics. With us all, it gives rise to many a half-pleasant, half-melancholy day-dream.

There cluster round it so many thoughts! Young views of Life, ere yet life was understood,—prospects of Death, while death seemed far away,—youthful hopes and schemes, friendships, harmonies of soul. Respecting such Pictures of this world and the next, some of us still ask, Are they true? Respecting those early feelings and affections, they are part living—part buried. Concerning our lost dear ones, each of us may say, "The heart alone knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy." Each, as he hears again the chime which recals his dead springtide, need not be ashamed of feeling as the poet felt:—

> "My eyes are dim with childish tears,
> My heart is idly stirr'd,
> For the same sound is in my ears
> Which in those days I heard."

Our subtle interweavings of sense, feeling, thought, suggest to us the widest of all wide questions; and one which did not escape the philosophic Wordsworth. Time takes away much from each of us. Time also leaves much behind. Does this bequest of Time—this legacy from Youth to Age—appear a gladness or a sorrow?

Is there any Faculty, natural to Man, which can attempt to answer this question, save and except his endowment of Practical Reason,—bringing with it an absolute Moral Law, and that *consequent* Truth of Retribution, which is the final bloom and accomplishment of the moral life of Law? For, see what this question involves! Our waking dream, which

none can share, has shown us, in long perspective, the images of the loved and lost,—forms torn from our side, and now become shadows. Is there a world where the good, the true, the righteous, and the holy, shall eat the fruit of their doings,—unplucked in this world, because Time was too short for its ripening? The Doctrine of Retribution affirms this finality, and asserts that without it the Law is for ever slacked, and judgment doth never go forth. Our waking dream brought back to us, also, our own high resolves, the noble ideals, the happy aspirations of Youth. Is, now, what we have pursued, and attained—or part-attained—a record written on the moving sea-sand, to be effaced by obliterating waters? Rather, it *is* like those primæval footprints disinterred from deep buried ocean-beaches,—bearing ineffaceable traces of lives, and ages, passed away,—brought up again to light and sunshine. Thus, too, affirms the Doctrine of Retribution, speaking with the authority of our highest human endowment: thus, too, shall it fare with each, and all of us. We write our lives, our good and evil, as children write upon what seems a shifting sandy shore. Yet we write within the solemn sound of a vast illimitable ocean, destined to overwhelm, yet to conserve, our memorial. By-and-by, when the fabric of the world we inhabit is changed, the ripple-marks of Time's tide shall still continue, entombed, only to reappear. Along with them will come back the record of our doings, whether they be good or bad.

If, then, we know this to be true, shall we not

value such knowledge above rubies? The reason why men do not so value it, is because they are told that such things are "unknowable,"—that they can be only conceived as possible, or probable. But my aim and object have been to show you that if Moral Distinctions are really true, and not mere theories for which *no man* need suffer or die—no, nor even deny himself in any special or particular manner,—if, in other words, self-control and self-sacrifice are moral Duties, not matters of opinion or of taste, *then* the very same source from which this moral Truth flows down, brings with it in one and the self-same stream other truths absolutely human; heart-stirring because transcendent—lifting human knowledge above the limits of mortality, and, therefore, teaching us to make our lives such as befit Immortals. And this is the full meaning and measure of the Doctrine of Retribution—its breadth and length, and depth and height. By virtue of this transcendency, it becomes the fit porch and vestibule of His Temple, Who is the true God and everlasting Life.

It has also been my aim and object to show you that, putting aside this primary source of knowledge, in which Moral Duty has its spring, there is not—neither can be *any* fountain of absolute knowledge left to Man. I do not mean absolute knowledge on *this* subject, and its kindred truths of Natural Religion only. What I mean is that the *whole* of our so-called human knowledge is (if this be put aside) left to us as bare custom, conjecture, hypothesis,—

whatever we choose to call the probability which we incline to keep.

It may seem that these are very strong statements. They are, however, not at all stronger than the statements of accepted and eminent authorities. You have heard that Greek and Teuton are at one respecting what pure Reason can affirm in the realm of Practical Truth. In this Lecture, I have quoted Kant as *instar omnium* on this point. Mr. Mill is sufficiently distinct with regard to what Empiricism can *not* say, even upon the broadest of all Fact-questions—the question "Is there an outside world of men and things, *really* known to us? Let me now ask your attention to the words of a most distinguished and generous antagonist of Mr. Mill's, —antagonistic, that is, to Mill's social conclusions, yet doing honour to his more philosophic principles. I mean Mr. Fitz-James Stephen. I will cite his judgment on three distinct problems. First, as to the *primary* grounds of Philosophy. Next, as to the *validity* of Natural Science. Thirdly, as to the degree of *certitude* attained by human knowledge in general. All these estimates are made without reference to any principle of Reason transcending Experience,—any principle, for instance, such as the axiomatic Truth or first source from which we have drawn our Moral Distinctions, our Doctrine of Retribution, and a firm faith in the final Development made possible to Mankind.

As regards First-grounds, Mr. Stephen writes thus:—

"It is possible to suggest hypotheses which would refute what

appear to us self-evident truths—even truths which transcend thought and logic. The proposition tacitly assumed by the use of the word 'I' may be false to a superior intelligence seeing in each of us, not individuals, but parts of some greater whole. The multiplication table assumes a world which will stay to be counted. 'One and one are two' is either a mere definition of the word two, or an assertion that each one is, and for some time continues to be, one. The proposition would never have occurred to a person who lived in a world where everything was in a state of constant flux. It may be doubted whether it would appear true to a being so constituted as to regard the universe as a single connected whole." *

Mr. Stephen calls these objections and difficulties "little more than fancies." Yet he suggests no answer to them. There is, in fact, but one answer possible; and that one he for the purposes of argument puts out of court. He is arguing with those who do *not* accept any transcendent truth. He argues on their ground, and therefore leaves both premises and conclusion as I have read them. No one can, I believe, do otherwise who meets empiricists on the level of Empiricism; and that is precisely the reason why I have not attempted so to meet them. What may be Mr. Stephen's private opinion respecting axiomatic Truths of Reason, especially Moral First-truths, I do not happen to know. My own conviction is, that without them every reasoning man is launched upon a shoreless Scepticism. Here, inevitable shipwreck awaits him. Well, if he can swim back, and, though forlorn, take heart again! To change our metaphor, the suicide of Doubt is the re-affirmation of First-truths, and above all of primary Moral Truth.

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, pp. 345-6.

Let us take Physical Science next :—

"It is surely obvious," says Mr. Stephen, "that all physical science is only a probability, and what is more, one which we have no means whatever of measuring. The whole process of induction and deduction rests on the tacit assumption that the course of nature has been, is, and will continue to be, uniform. Such, no doubt, is the impression which it makes on us. It is the very highest probability to which we can reach. It is the basis of all systematic thought. It has been verified with wonderful minuteness in every conceivable way; and yet no one has ever been able to give any answer at all to the question, What proof have you that the uniformities which you call laws will not cease or alter to-morrow? In regard to this, our very highest probability, we are like a man rowing one way and looking another, and steering his boat by keeping her stern in a line with an object behind him."*

Now, Physical Science is held up to us every month as being the very bloom and perfection of all Empirical Methods. Its business is to remedy the instability of Phenomena; to convert them into Facts; define, register, and place them under the *nexus* of some certain Law. But what if the uniformities called "Laws" may cease and alter to-morrow? Mr. Stephen's question is justified by the results of our previous examination—results in which Hume agrees with Kant, Tyndall and Huxley with Plato and Aristotle. *No* conceivable amount of *Experience* can verify what is, in its own nature, and by virtue of its conditions, unverifiable. The moment we say a Truth or Law is absolute, we pronounce it transcendent—a word which need alarm no hearer. On this account, great natural-science philosophers, like great metaphysicians, have ac-

* *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 346.

cepted the decision of Practical Reason. And the Practical Reason of Man long ago decided that the course of Nature *is* uniform, in the sense that each change correlates a cause of change. No kind of Empiricism can justify such a Law. Under empirical Law, Nature's uniformities are all simply strong probabilities; and Natural Science can never be thought more than extremely probable.

We may now approach the larger question considered by Mr. Stephen,—Does this same uncertainty attach to human knowledge generally? Immediately after the sentence last quoted, he adds:—

"I do not say this to undervalue science, but to show the conditions of human knowledge. Nothing can be more certain than a conclusion scientifically established." *

He had said two pages before:—

"There is, indeed, no great difficulty in showing that we cannot get beyond probability at all in any department of human knowledge. One short proof of this is as follows: The present is a mere film melting as we look at it. Our knowledge of the past depends on memory, our knowledge of the future on anticipation; and both memory and anticipation are fallible. The firmest of all conclusions and judgments are dependent upon facts which, for aught we know, may have been otherwise in the past, may be otherwise in the future, and may at this moment present a totally different appearance to other intelligent beings from that which they present to ourselves."†

And he subjoins, a page or two after this:—

"There is probably no proposition whatever which under no imaginable change of circumstances could ever appear false, or at least doubtful, to any reasonable being at any time or any place."‡

* *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 347.
† *Ibid.*, p. 345. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

Some here might like to retort by quoting the English dramatic poet, who tells us that one proposition at least is very sure: "Death is certain to all,—all must die." Or you may prefer a more solemn authority—the great Hebrew Preacher: "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of Death."*

Let me, however, beg you to remark with me that we have one and all of us to *choose* between very opposite systems of life. And the choice is a serious, not to say an anxious, event for us all. Mr. Stephen, to whom I am already indebted, expresses his feelings by a similitude:—

"We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still, we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road, we shall be dashed to pieces."†

To use another simile:—The wreck must be, so far as we can judge, irreparable, whilst our time for deliberation is short, and the danger of drifting considerable. But rational deliberation and firmly based choice is what we may well call a Philosophy. Just as men when they argue are unconscious logicians, and just as in the commonest affairs of life we hear deep metaphysical principles taken for granted, and made into maxims,—precisely so does Philosophy penetrate every part of human thinking and living by virtue of their being human. But

* Ecclesiastes viii. 8.

† *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 353.

Thought and Life become most consciously recognized *as* Philosophy, when we use our reasoning powers in choosing the aims and hopes for which we will live and die. "As long as men" (remarks the same writer) "have any mental activity at all, they will speculate, as they always have speculated, about themselves, their destiny, and their nature. They will ask in different dialects the questions, What? Whence? Whither?"* This kind of discussion, let it be ever so rude and bold, or so hesitating and inconclusive, is felt at once to be philosophic in its essential nature. And because it is *human*, philosophy must be determined by the essential character of Humanity. Thus, when problems of Life are viewed as affecting our nation or our race, a knowledge of the constituent elements of human Society influences the consideration. And this kind of knowledge is not adequately possessed by all men. "To a scientific man," writes the same authority, "Society has a totally different appearance, —it is, as far as he is concerned, quite a different thing, from what it is to a man whose business lies with men."† Mr. Stephen's remark is no doubt safe. The most useful aid, therefore, in determining human problems is a right acquaintance with the powers and motive principles of Human Nature.

During late years those have been supposed to know Humanity most truly who have been most concerned in depreciating it. Wisest of all, they

* *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 340.
† *Ibid.*, p. 341.

who depict it as little human as possible, and who draw Man with the lineaments of a beast. Cynicism of this kind is not the product of one mode of thinking, one age, or one set of social conditions. It comes upon individual persons when criticism has taken the place of original work. The more men busy themselves with details while they leave deep principles shadowy, the less will they see anything great or good in Humanity. Hence we may rightly infer that every moral teacher ought to *ground* and systematize his teaching, on pain of seeing it rejected as being a self-condemned Philosophy. And this rule seems right, because *un*grounded and *non*-harmonized moral teaching—mere criticism or dogmatism—will invariably lead to the cynical view of human nature and human destinies. This same Cynicism comes upon Peoples, when the national life burns low, and there exists a numbing deadness in regard of grand objects, together with a sensitiveness to what are called "class interests"—especially mere money interests. It comes upon Churches which suffer from decay in the higher kinds of Faith and Spiritual Insight. Here, again, details and minor differences overlay and darken every deepest Truth. In these Lectures, I have proceeded upon a view of Humanity which is diametrically the reverse of non-human. I have rested my utterances on a ground which few are likely to pronounce unsafe, provided they examine and understand it. I have supposed that the powers and motory principles most distinctive of human nature in its noblest

examples are the truest characteristics of essential Humanity; and, therefore, the best standards after which we ought ourselves to think and to live individually. I feel quite safe in making this latter assumption, because I am not discussing a fit constitution for Zulu-land, but the σκοπὸς βίου, the mark of our calling and vocation as enlightened Men, who are Morally responsible. In other words, the noblest characteristic distinctive of Humanity ought to be the determining principle of that serious choice which must be made by each and all of us.

In choosing, we need not complain of the embarrassment of riches. Life, at first, seems abounding with resources, just as it did to the Prodigal Son in the Parable. But a few years' experience convinces us, as it did him, that all motives for choice resolve themselves into an *alternative*. We must find our inducements, hopes, and happiness, in this life only. *Or* we must look beyond the grave. If we are able to do the latter, our choice may seem settled at once. For everything we enjoy in this life is perishable, and we ourselves have no continuing city here. If we have the power of overleaping Mortality, it will be our wisdom so to do. The real question, therefore, is whether we human beings actually possess any such power.

This question I have endeavoured to answer from the head and the heart of Man. The possibility of answering in this way, and the answer itself, bears (as I showed in my first Lecture) an important relation to the Evidences of Religion. The Doctrine

of Retribution asserts that Right and Wrong are as modes of action irreconcileable during this life, and in Reason essential contradictories. As such they are the expressions of a Law absolute and immutable, illimitable in its duration and development. If this is ascertainably true from elements of Truth which pertain to us as Men, it is plain that to *be* good and to *do* good—in one word, to be *religious*—is to be truly Human. The Preacher's words thus come home to every one of us: "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the Whole of Man." And the reason he adds is also a sufficing reason: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."*

That other and antagonistic system of choice, which finds its inducements, hopes, and happiness in this life only, is a system founded on doubt or denial. In theory it denies—or, at least, deliberately doubts to the very utmost extent of doubt—all possibility of any human knowledge absolutely certain. Practical Doubt concerning present realities is inadmissible, because inconsistent with the business of life. In practice, therefore, this system confines itself to rejecting every kind of knowledge which transcends our earthly existence; everything which remains to us credibly true beyond the grave.

The adherents of this system are accustomed to think of human far-sightedness as having a similitude to telescopic vision. With as much truth may their

* Ecclesiastes xii. 13, 14.

own system be figured as that conjurer's view which is gained by peeping into a kaleidoscope. The difference stands thus: A good Telescope possesses above all things penetration. Its business is to make distant realities observable by human eyes. It must neither distort nor displace its objects, nor yet must it colour them. The field of a kaleidoscope takes in nothing farther distant than a few inches. Its objects are shreds of artificial productions: fragments of tinsel, for example; and broken bits of coloured glass. Their symmetry and prettiness to the eye are properties given by artificially arranged mirrors. The effect charms an uninitiated observer; but all he admires in it is optical illusion. We happen to know this is so because we can take the kaleidoscope to pieces.

In the system of kaleidoscope-thought there is no attempt to penetrate celestial spaces—much less to discover Reality therein. It endeavours to bring under refracting angles the broken tinsel of Life—its glittering bits of coloured glass. Beyond this it professes *nothing*, because nothing more is conceived to be possible. Astronomers look upon the kaleidoscope as a child's toy, or, at best, a philosophic plaything. But how few people are Herschels! and how many would refuse to accept a powerful reflecting Telescope if offered under the condition of employing it!

In this refusal, Empiricism and Scepticism are at one. Neither can dispense with the laws of optics. Both *use* them for short-sighted conclusions. But there is a difference in the wording of the two re-

fusals; and, to some minds, the Sceptic may appear less remote from Belief than the Empiricist. The man who says distinctly, "Nothing *can* be known," often feels (as Hume did) a recoil from the *nothingness* of his own language. He feels, too, that he has said a Something, the hollow echoes of which may not die away for ever!

But let me pause here.

I have already trodden so many and such various paths of controversy, that I wish to express myself for the remainder of this Lecture as a non-controversialist. Let me, now, place before you the conclusions for which I have assigned reasons, less as questions to be argued, than as the creed of a Theist, who sees in them not Truths of Morality only, nor truths of Natural Religion only, but *instances and evidences* of the beneficence, the wisdom, the provident Love of his Father and his God.

> "O felix hominum genus
> Si vestros animos amor,
> Quo cœlum regitur, regat!"

The great Being Who decked this world with beautiful apparel, has strewn many a fresh floweret by the side of our human highway. These are given us that, as Pilgrims, we may admire their beauty, inhale their fragrance, and joyously travel on. We move forwards—our roses wither. They could not long cheer our stay, if we remained amongst them. Our human youthhood, with its healthy hopes and bright

Boethius. *De Consolatione*, Lib. ii., Met. 8.

promise, is, after all, little better than a pretty, fading, transitory flower-bud. In our riper years of steady resolve and action, we work because our strength is high, and our time is short. Yet this active Manhood would be the *saddest* period of human life, could we be persuaded that our labour was in vain—all in vain; and that we ourselves—doomed, each after each, to be cut down—when we die, must die for ever.

God has given us a better hope,—yet a hope not unmixed with fear. "Whatsoever a man soweth, the same shall he also reap." The husbandman traces his furrow when roses droop, autumn leaves are falling, and wild winds sing the dirge of the departing year. Mists and rain-clouds hide from his eye the arch of azure heaven. But he knows of a certain Spring-tide, with its returning sunshine and its pulses of life; when foliage shall burst forth, and flowers grow up again. Then the grain, which seems hopelessly dead, shall be quickened and put on a new raiment: first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. Our human sowing has, in like manner, its Autumn and its Spring. We sow works and words, inward musings and acts of Will, thoughts cherished and matured, self-conquests, gains of sovereignty in the Spiritual sphere,—one and all destined to survive this life. Not a deed or resolve of Faith and Duty, imperial over sensuousness and temptation, shall be lost. All will be treasured, fertilized, and reproduced, fresh and fair in their own vitality at last. Without this one warm belief, our

work would be a cold automatism; our birth more dim and deathlike than a sleep and a forgetting; our lost dear ones would be lost indeed:—

> "Inspiring thought of rapture, yet to be,
> The tears of love were hopeless but for thee!"

Our whole earthly life must needs become to us a valley of dry bones, concerning which no man could dare to say—

> "Venient cito sæcula, cùm jam
> Socius calor ossa revisat."*

Dying men would be forced to bury their dead hopes, and to know for a certainty that their thoughts must perish with them.

Considering thus what might have been, but happily *is not*, we see in the glad reverse some lineaments of our Father's love. To each of us He has given the germ of a Life that can never die. The law of that Life is that nothing will be, nor can be, lost. Its unconsidered fragments are like grains of seed-corn, full of infinite after-promise. Even as the field of the Dead is God's acre, so is the field of living Duty His harvest-field. Wheat and tares, —nothing will be plucked up, all will grow, all shall have their solemn reaping Day. It will be a gathering to all, a garnering to some. And this Hope, like every hope that visits our time of trial and discipline, is a Hope mixed with Fear.

Would we have it otherwise? Would we desire to lose our Fear? Which of us can look into his own

* Prudentius. *Cathemerinon*, Hymnus X.

heart and say, I at least can dispense with that restraint? There is a fear—a painful, soul-harrowing fear—which perfect love casts out. But there is also a fear which Love deepens, and filial tenderness blends with the gentlest tones of Duty. That fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And who amongst us has not learned from the errors of his own devious path that this beginning is oft-times a lesson which needs to be repeated? Over and over again have we seen the reality of this need verified by the prosperous wicked: "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." In the day of the Church's worldly prosperity, far too many of us are apt to think a quiet life and easy death the happiest. It was otherwise when the fight between Faith and Fury waxed hottest:—

> "Mors ipsa beatior inde est,
> Quòd per cruciamina leti
> Via panditur ardua justis,
> Et ad astra doloribus itur."

To those times of cruel repression and believing resistance, I have referred more than once. They help us to realize the fact that the Doctrine of Retribution is a law of *Moral Freedom*. For, this truth, like the blue sky, bends over all. It sets the slave free from his master. The small and great are equal in respect of it. In its strength, prisoners heed no more the voice of the oppressor; timid spirits exchange their abject fear of what Man can do unto them for the elevating fear of God; and the natural

* Prudentius, as before.

coward rises to the courage and crown of a Martyr. For this reason, among other reasons, the annals of persecution and martyrdom will never lose their sad yet hopeful significance. They, too, cherish in us a hope mixed with fear.

In those tearful days, men chose energetically. Their choice was tried in a furnace of affliction, heated one seven times hotter than its wont. Even in our calm age, Christian men and women have often cause to say, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." He chasteneth: and, like the persecuted of old, they find in this Fear of Him a salutary and invigorating thought. The Martyr visioned, sometimes, walking beside him in the flames, a Form like the Son of God. Sorrowful people now behold more distantly the lineaments of their Father's love. Yet sufferers now, as then, endure all things in the confident hope of receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, if only they have grace to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. And, therefore, whether suffering much or little, they confess, as Death draws near to each, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn to keep Thy statutes."

From such facts of Human history we learn nearly the same lesson as was taught us by contemplating, in thought, the process of a world's development. There are (we saw) good and sufficient reasons why, upon any world like ours, a wise and beneficent Creator would not at once bestow Perfection, Peace, Rest. But, for the pursuit of these things, He gives

His reasonable creatures ample cause. And He gives us cause likewise for the assured Belief that we shall finally attain the happiness we are steadfastly pursuing. Only, let us still pursue; and let us with patience wait for it.

The devout Theist, as well as the Moral Philosopher, has reason to be glad that such assurance of attainment as Natural Religion yields, is brought home to us, not through Nature, but through Man. Natural Theology would cease to be a Theology, *if* it exalted Nature into a Divinity, or proclaimed her as the just image of One Who is essentially Divine. If a *Christian* were thus to view the Natural world, he would plainly ignore the words of St. Paul:—"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope: because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* Hence, Creation's groans and travail-pains until now. Hence, that "earnest expectation," which "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." † Whatever this passage may, or may not mean, it is so far from deifying Nature, that it binds upon her a chain of servitude, to be unlocked only by the hands of the true Images of God. Of them, that is, who have been created anew in righteousness and true holiness.

What human beings really see in Nature at her best, is, as I have said, a revelation of Order and of Method,—a striving after Unification, traceable

* Romans viii. 20, 21. † *Ibid.*, verse 19.

throughout the diversity of her multiform aspects. We admire, too, even in her more Titanic and awful features, the lines and colouring of indescribable loveliness. Their repose and grandeur satisfy our childhood with æsthetic pleasures, ere yet it has been taught to recognize Nature's grim powers and rigours,—the pains she inflicts upon us who are servile to all her skyey influences. The simpler a child, the less is it afraid of even her final terrors ;—

> "It feels its life in every limb ;
> What should it know of Death ?"

You may remember how the poet of Natural Religion paints childhood's insight still more brightly, along with its dark reverse. He describes, in a sublime Ode, the change which, as we grow older, visibly appears to each of us in Nature's beauty,—

> "The things that I have seen I now can see no more."

And again, a little further on,—

> "Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
> Where is it now—the glory and the dream ?"

Yet the first childlike impression returns often, upon most thoughtful men. We feel it when we look on sights and scenes which make us sensible of our littleness, our changefulness, or our ignorance,—which tell us, in brief, what children we still remain ! When, for example, we watch a sunrise above the snowy Alps, a waterspout travelling over the ocean, or a sandstorm crossing the desert. Or when we gaze up at the starry skies and into their

immeasurable blue, while the fitful moon, apt image of our own alternations, lights up lake and forest, valley and circling hills. Under these, and all similar influences, we are apt to say with the same poet,—

> "O joy! that in our embers
> Is something that doth live,
> That Nature yet remembers
> What was so fugitive!"

By Nature, we mean, and he means, *our* Nature. He is not forgetful of the fact that the most enduring of our gains from conversing with outward Nature are what we ourselves have earned, and given her: given her, to receive back invested with many a fresh and flowery chaplet. And, therefore, he concludes by rendering

> "Thanks to the Human Heart by which we live!"

In truth, whenever our Manhood tries to explain the secret of Nature's charm, we feel, at once, that her symmetry is not sympathy. We feel that she surrounds us with a loveliness, fair as frostwork,—but, like frostwork, cold and hard as iron. She is the same to us, whether we smile or sigh. She cannot rejoice with them that do rejoice, nor weep with them that weep. There is no gloom upon her hills, no frown upon her atmosphere, although the dear one of our heart lies in death-agony before us. The tender-hued dawn-light crept on just the same when Tennyson's "Queen of the May" awoke in her freshness of health and strength,—and when she

was dying away from all desire of earthly happiness, whilst her mother and sister sorrowed at her side :—

> "Oh, look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;
> He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
> And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
> Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine."

Not only in grief, but in joy, we realize the truth that there is in the world of things inanimate no answering mood—no love-light—only a charm which, though not in itself evanescent, flies from us when we open our hearts the most longingly to its influence. Beautiful as Nature is, we never can call her Beauty *ours*. Nay, more,—could she give her All to us, it would not satisfy human affections. Then comes the unavoidable impression: This beauty is not hers to give or keep. It is not,—cannot be, her own. But we feel that it must derive its witchcraft from a Living Source,—a Spirit in no hopeless estrangement from ourselves. And this Soul of Beauty and of Love may some day yield us the companionship our spirits have failed to find.*

One delight of the Poem last quoted consists in the Poet's glimpse behind that veil so fair to look

Compare Wordsworth's Ode above cited, from

> "And, oh ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
> Think not of any severing of our loves!
> Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
> I only have relinquish'd one delight
> To live beneath your more habitual sway."

Down to his closing lines—

> "To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

upon, so hard to raise. Some here may possibly know how, far away in Africa, Livingstone strove to recal and transcribe, with feeble hand, that exquisitely natural passage, which asserts the Immortality, not only of the Soul itself, but of its cherished sympathies; as well as its continued nearness to the objects of its affection. And *this*, we may safely say, is *the* belief in a Future existence most germane to Man—the belief prompted by that religious sentiment which is (as Dr. Tyndall observes) a part of our Nature, immanent, and indestructible. We kneel beside a dear one's death-bed. The departing voice that bids us a faint farewell may soon be beyond the Sun; yet the Soul that cleaves to our Soul may still find means to be often, often with us when we think it far away. Is this nearness an unreasonable hope? To live within the Light of God is to enjoy a Spiritual Freedom and mode of Existence, transcending the highest thoughts of us who see through a glass darkly,—yet kindling our hearts that aspire after it with longings which cannot be uttered. And who amongst us would like *seriously* to affirm that the deep warm sigh of foreboding Humanity is unceasingly breathed after that which exists not, and which will never—can never—be?

Of Man's Heart, the Poet is our truest interpreter. And in the reasonable Beliefs, which cluster round Immortality, both Head and Heart meet together. We have just seen how Poets, unlike in many ways, are *alike* in their echoes of this one human feeling; and we might quote whole volumes to the same

effect. In former Lectures, I placed before you a series of arguments addressed to pure Reason, and resting on the foundation of Independent Morality. They are irrefragable, and demonstrate my conclusion beyond demur, provided the Moral rule, in order to be practical, must needs be absolute in its commands. Let this be granted necessary, and we see that it could not, *in fact*, exercise such authority without the condition that Justice shall be done at last. Neither, indeed, *ought it* so to command, nor yet to be allowed any claim in Right *apart* from this certainty of Retribution. Now, we know, too well, that in this life present, Retributive Justice is *not* done. Therefore, if Practical Morality may and does command absolutely, there must, of necessity, exist a future Life of Retribution, in store for all moral beings.

This line of reasoning, addressed to the Intellect of Man, stands in both correspondency and antithesis over against the determinations of his affective nature. The Head is (to vary my metaphor) a separate but faithful echo of the Heart. Between these two paths, leading to one and the same conclusion, lies a third, which reaches the meeting-point of both. It carries us thither through a survey of our distinctive Human activity,—the functional character and tendencies of Man.

The wider this survey, the better for our purpose: I, however, can only indicate its more palpable features. The easiest mode of viewing them is to *contrast* Man (as I have done before) with what we

know of the lower creatures. Their life finds its scope in the various pleasurable and self-guarding instincts, connected with nutrition, reproduction, and other allied processes and phases of existence. But *these* are not the true Life of Humanity. They are merely animal conditions, pre-required for the exercise and growth of Man's real functions,—those functions which make him essentially MAN. By consequence, the inferior creature attains its full and proper development in a short time. The brief duration of this process is commensurate with the creature's limited powers, and its smallness of value to the world of animality: a value still less to the human world, except as means to further ends, beyond and apart from the fact of each creature's individualized existence. Whether such an existence passes through the stages of animal tranquillity and decay,—or is interrupted and brought to a close suddenly,—we can never lament for it as a break in any kind of Progress unmeasured, and by us not measurable; or as the loss of a light which might lighten whole nations. But over the death of a good Man,—still more of a good and great Man,—we mourn as over an event too often irreparable to his fellows. Again, in the various *poses* of mere animal life, we see a fitness to the landscape amidst which each is placed. But paint Man, as he has been painted, with the whole scenery of Nature for his background. There appears no *appositeness*, nothing congenial: in a word, he stands without a Home. As a mere question of fitness, then, and of what is

harmonious in structure and adaptation, Man would be indescribably misplaced in this life,—*if* this life were All. According to every rule of Judgment, æsthetical or teleological,—according to every indication given by function, tendency, development,—the supposition that this life could be Man's All is plainly absurd; and therefore inadmissible. But to the eye of a Theist, it appears pre-eminently so. The disbelieving question would in that case be properly asked once more,—"Wherefore hast Thou made all men for nought?" Why, indeed? Nay, for worse than nought. To be so great, and yet so little—to be made even as the fishes of the sea, and the creeping things! So noble—so seemingly Immortal—and yet so dwindled to a span! Better he that hath never seen the Sun! Better Nihilism, than a world of reality so defaced! Better no eye, outward or inward, to behold the monstrous incongruity!—better, absolute Nothingness!

These dark doubts allow *only one* answer. Equally unanswerable by him who ignores a Life beyond the grave, is the objection,—Can Morality,—Moral power, true Moral Life,—be annihilated? If so, there is nothing *real* in the Supremacy over all *other* affections, principles, and activities claimed by Moral Distinctions. Yet these distinctions are affirmed as real, and as really supreme, by the Human Head and Heart.

Considerations such as these admit of vast extension and many illustrations. But for them, Time fails me. I may venture, however, to remind you,

how thinkers so antagonistic as Hume and Kant unite in admiring that wise and beneficent arrangement by which the truths of Morality and Natural Religion are made obvious and easily accessible to the powers of very *ordinary* human beings. For instance, the *manner* in which fair and honest minds regard Moral Distinctions, is, according to Hume, of the greatest possible value.

"Extinguish," he tells us, "all the warm feelings and prepossessions in favour of virtue, and all disgust or aversion to vice. Render men totally indifferent towards these distinctions; and Morality is no longer a practical study, nor has any tendency to regulate our lives and actions." *

Were these states of emotion left to be acquired by slowly arguing ourselves into them, how much time and power must have been lost, not only to individual men, but to each human society, and (more injuriously still) to our whole Race! The actual arrangement is precisely the reverse:—

"In that," says Kant, "which concerns all human beings without exception, Nature cannot be accused of any partial distribution of her gifts. So far as the essential aim of Human Nature is regarded, the very highest Philosophy can attain no higher eminence than that reached under the guidance commonly bestowed upon the meanest Understanding."†

From Kant's point of view, an earnest man of an *ordinary* understanding finds *two* reasons for accepting, in some shape or another, the Doctrine of Retribution. First, he finds within himself convic-

* *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Sect. I. (G. and G. 172.)

† *Critick of Pure Reason.* Rosenkranz, p. 640.

tions, which impress upon his emotional nature, as well as his Conscience, the existence of that often-longed-for, yet always awful, Futurity. Secondly, he sees that the same kinds of conviction, in varying extents and with variable consequences, possess the minds of his fellow-men. But to a *philosophic* thinker the same facts afford a *third* reason for the same acceptance. The Philosopher perceives that the convictions of ordinary men, and their general diffusion, are exactly what *ought to be.* Thus his practical Reason as a philosopher,—to say nothing of his Faith as a Theist if he be one,—would remain *unsatisfied* were these facts otherwise.

The two former arguments are, we may observe, *direct;* this third argument is indirect. I notice its indirectness, because I cannot close without mentioning one or two further indirect results of the Doctrine of Retribution, when believingly understood and accepted.

In all that has gone before, I have placed this Doctrine before you as a human truth,—a Something belonging to our own higher nature, as contrasted with inferior, sensual, and animal natures. Retribution has been viewed both as a Reality, truly Rational, truly Moral; and as a fulfilment of that *prophecy* which has written itself upon our Being. To borrow a similitude from St. Paul, that prophecy is like a foundation-stone bearing two inscribed Seals. On the human side, it tells us men that we may reasonably hope for a nobler development, a more excellent perfection, if only we are faithful to the

law written on the table of our human hearts. On the Divine side, it tells us, as believers in God, that the Law of Retribution is a Law of *Infinite Love.* It exists for the advancement of Good, the debasement of Evil, the triumph of Purity and of Peace. And our own consciences acknowledge that Peace is unattainable without the attainment of Purity.

The instant this latter thought is realized, he who strives most earnestly after Purity will be the very first to say, as the Prophet said, "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips;" or to cry out, with the Apostle, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

And the question at once arises, Is there anything in the Doctrine of Retribution itself,—anything in the code of Natural Religion immediately founded upon it,—which can soften a difficulty confessedly superhuman: superhuman, and altogether impracticable to Man? For, who can bring a clean thing out of an Unclean?

The thinker who would completely answer this whole question from the resources of his Reason, may soon read in his own Soul the truth of the Poet's words:—

> "I falter where I firmly trod,
> And, falling with my weight of cares
> Upon the great world's altar-stairs
> That slope thro' darkness up to God,
>
> "I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
> And gather dust and chaff, and call
> To what I feel is Lord of All,
> And faintly trust the larger hope."

But the Doctrine of Retribution itself, viewed as we have viewed it, points us firmly and freely to the "larger Hope." Yet could there not possibly exist some means for purifying the impure,—could there be nothing to bestow true Heart's Ease upon the foreboding spirit, a living Amaranth on frail and mortal creatures,—then surely the Law of Retribution must *cease* to be a Law of Purity and of Love. No human soul could find, or even reasonably seek, Moral Freedom, Perfection, Peace. The Present would remain what it is—a struggle. The Future never could become what we have hoped—a Repose.

The more truthful answer is this. As, in the world of mechanical Nature, fixed and determinate, there subsists a world of Moral Nature, aspiring, capable of reformation, and self-formation: as, amidst the sphere of things insensate, or simply instinctive—the low and the limited—there exists a Being upon whom are inscribed certain lineaments of the Infinite; so that, by virtue of his existence, the purely Natural carries within itself the *Supra*-Natural: precisely *in the same manner* does there dwell within Natural Religion the moving life-power of supernatural Belief. The Law of Retribution, revealed *in* us, *anticipates* a Spiritual Law bringing Freedom from a Sphere by nature *above* us—a Spiritual Law, endowed with such Divine Life as can make us Spiritually free.

The guidance given by the Law of Retribution conducts us to a still higher eminence of foresight. Hence we may see distantly—but distinctly—some

characteristics of that Spiritual Law which is our reasonable expectation. We are sure, for instance, that Peace never can come down to Man, severed from her companion and safeguard—Purity. For erring creatures, this necessity implies the essential condition of Repentance—a real change in life and disposition. As a *rule* of Retributive Justice, this same necessity enforces the establishment of a Moral *Test*, supreme over all Men. "By their fruits ye shall know them." It prescribes, also, that every given mode of religious Purification shall contain *a moral element.* The consequence, therefore, of approaching the Spiritual sphere by the path we have tried to travel, is that every step of our pilgrimage has exercised a *chastening* effect upon our Hope. We have become disposed to accept certain kinds of Belief; we have become indisposed for faith in other imaginable aids and incentives.

The Doctrine of Retribution *disposes* us to believe in whatever raises Man up towards the Ideal of a perfectly pure Moral Life,—in other words, towards the Divine. It *indisposes* us to rest in a lower Ideal: such, for example, as the Pagan Ideal—that of a sovereign Humanity, howsoever deified. If we apprehend a need of some mediating Personality, between beings such as we are and the Infinite, the Mediator Natural Religion suggests, is not one of our weak selves glorified, but a Son of Glory descending to share our sorrows. Not a Man-God, but a God-Man. Similarly, it disposes us to seek for *truth* in thoughts and words which are true *for us*,

yet *transcend* our world—for *observances* in a manner of worship penetrating our *spirits* in order to exalt them. It indisposes to accept, as safe utterances, the decrees of any alleged human infallibility; or to seek for peace in either bodily or mental unrest: both which are the common effects of superstitious terror. And we dissever Superstition from real Religion, through its *inaptness* to harmonize with the Moral Law given us. By no such superstitious exercises, but by Godliness, we hold the promise of a true Life now, and of the Life which is to come.

These Lectures have been addressed in the first place to the Young. I have asked you to try and realize things far off,—high above your present life, as the Heavens are high above the earth. Let me invite you, in conclusion, to a less arduous task. Imagine to yourselves a picture, not in Eternity, but in Time. There comes a passing scene, the like of which you have all beheld,—a scene and period inevitable, when you will feel that Death, which now *may* come soon to any here, must—aye, *must*—(that is the point) come very soon to each of you. With this scene in mind—with the figure of Death approaching in its background—contemplate the description given by Plato of a calm, because a Morally truthful, old age. See how it stands contrasted with the old age of a Brute. Man's age is, we know, a time of spiritual advancement often, and therefore of gain: the other is, at its very best, a time of animal tranquillity and decay. Plato's good old man endeavours to do all the Justice he

has omitted towards his fellow-men, and to propitiate, according to his lights, the powers he deems divine. You, when old age creeps over you, will *more truly* know how to love your neighbours as yourselves,—the amends you ought to make,—the cares you ought to bestow. Your knowledge, too, will regard a *kind* of Propitiation very different from the blood of Bulls and of Goats. You will understand how a Law of Sacrifice can give birth, within your Souls, to a Law of never-ceasing, all-sanctifying, Prayer and Praise. Think, then, that it will be yours to crown your lives, even as Man ought to crown the world in which he lives, by Creation's sweetest, holiest incense—the worship of Him Who *is* a Spirit, in spirit and in truth.

Yet, who amongst us has never felt apprehensive concerning Life's closing scene? Who does not sometimes repeat in his heart,—

"Be near me when my Light is low"?

Whilst the great and good Richard Hooker lay in his mortal sickness, he said, "I have lived to see this world is made up of perturbations, and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near." This is the true Christian attitude of Faith, amongst dying men. For when we quit this world, it is not to melt into the infinite Past, but to live in an infinite Future. And, thus far, every Theist and every Christian preacher are agreed. Each tells the same truth in

his own form of speech. All strive to enforce the same lesson of anticipation :—

"Courage, we say, and point you toward the Land."

The calm land where, if you have attained purity in this stormy and struggling life, you will, on that everlasting shore, find Peace.

The final lesson to young men is, therefore, the old—*old* exhortation,—"Remember *now* thy Creator, in the days of thy youth."

Other conclusions and inferences have been stated at the various landing-places of our progress. But there is one which cannot be omitted in the Church of a great University.

Whatever changes may characterize our nineteenth century, *one* serious event, at least, seems certain. To borrow the idea of a distinguished Foreigner,* European opinion appears gradually dividing between the sceptic and the bigot—the spirit that governs Rome and the spirit which animated Voltaire. And this tendency to violent extremes seems likely to bring about the religious crisis of the coming age.

Now, one special aim I have kept before me, is to show that Reason, — Practical Reason, — *the* Reason which brings to Man his first principles of Morality, neither tends towards, nor sanctions, the one extreme or the other. None here present will say that the Gospel permits either; nor, again, that either can possibly flow from reasonable political maxims, or a regard to the *good* of Mankind.

* Signor Villari.

Yet, the conflict seems inevitable. Let every man gird on—if not his weapons, at least his defensive armour; so that he may not fail in the fight! What I myself, and those who think with me, believe to be the best and safest equipment, has been described with sufficient exactness. But, to all that has been said, suffer me to add one word of caution. Let no thinker place his trust in that shadowy Idol of our day—Public Opinion! For, if the living Heart of a true man has Insight, Opinion is its faithful mouthpiece; and out of the abundance of that Heart the tongue of Opinion speaketh. But how if the Man be not true, and his heart be devoid of insight? Even so is it with the hearts and tongues of whole Peoples. Or, again, if we liken Public Opinion to the glass in which a Nation beholds its face, we must needs ask,—What is the *inner* principle which gives to those features expression, character, Soul? Take care that the name by which you call it shall, at least, signify a *transcendent* Something: a Principle of Life which must remain, although provinces and empires change,—when the Globe we now inhabit becomes a silent waste,—nay, when Suns and starry Systems decline and disappear.

THE END.

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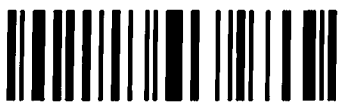
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